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THE NEW
MUTANTS
TM
SECRET WARS II
CONTINUES IN THIS ISSUE

THE SINGER & HER SONG
THERE IS A PLACE BEYOND SPACE AND TIME WHERE NONE OF THE RULES OF REALITY APPLY. IT IS CALLED LIMBO.
ITS RULER IS A FIFTEEN-YEAR OLD MUTANT WITH THE FACE OF AN ANGEL AND AT LEAST PART OF THE SOUL OF A DEVIL INCARNATE, HER NAME IS ILLYANA RASPUTIN.
MOMENTS AGO, IN LOS ANGELES, AN ENTITY KNOWN AS THE BEYONDER CALLED FORTH THAT PART OF HER WHICH SHE HAS ALWAYS KEPT HIDDEN AND FOUGHT WITH ALL HER STRENGTH TO DENY.* NOW, THANKS TO HIM, SHE HAS BECOME THE DARKCHILDE -- WHO WILL SOMEDAY BRING ABOUT ARMAGEDDON, THE OBLITERATION OF HER WORLD AND ALL ITS PEOPLE.
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NEW MUTANTS STARS
THIS REVELATION PROVED MORE THAN SHE COULD BEAR -- AND SO, IN HER MADNESS AND TERROR, SHE FLED HERE TO LIMBO, TAKING WITH HER FOUR FELLOW MUTANTS: KITTY PRYDE, HER BEST FRIEND, SAM GUTHRIE, ALISON BLAIRE (THE DAZZLER) AND RACHEL SUMMERS.
* IN SECRET WARS II #1 -- A.

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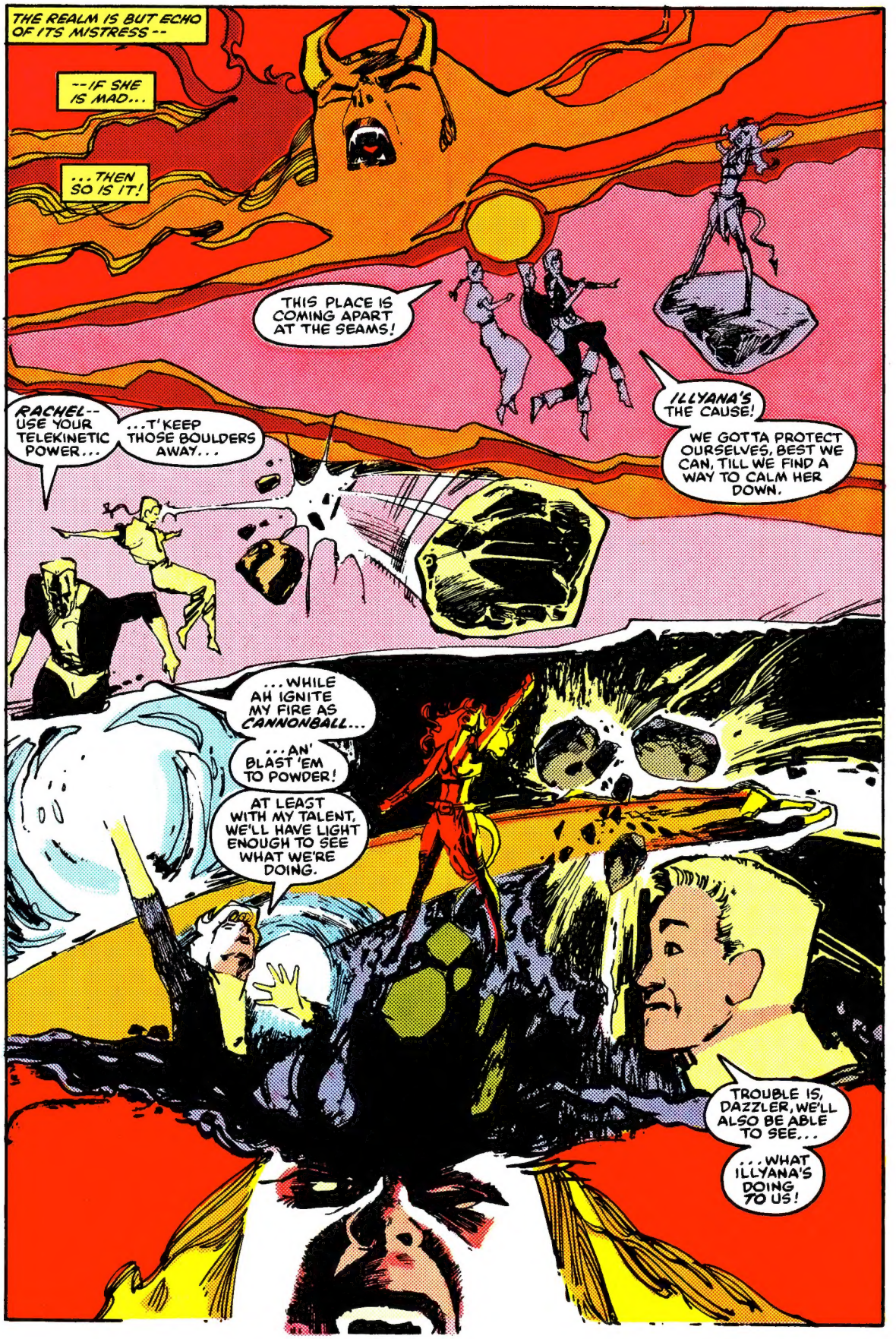
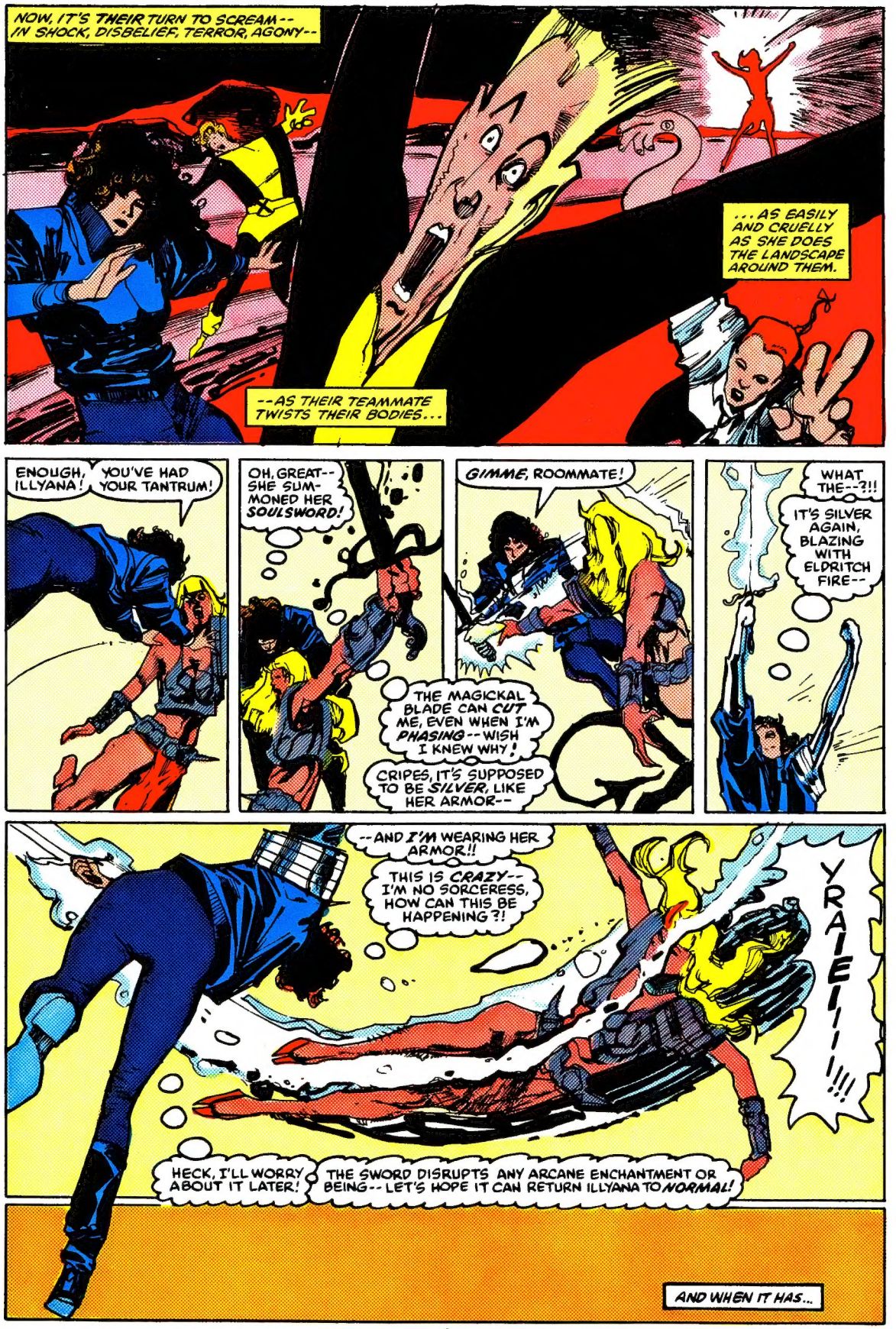
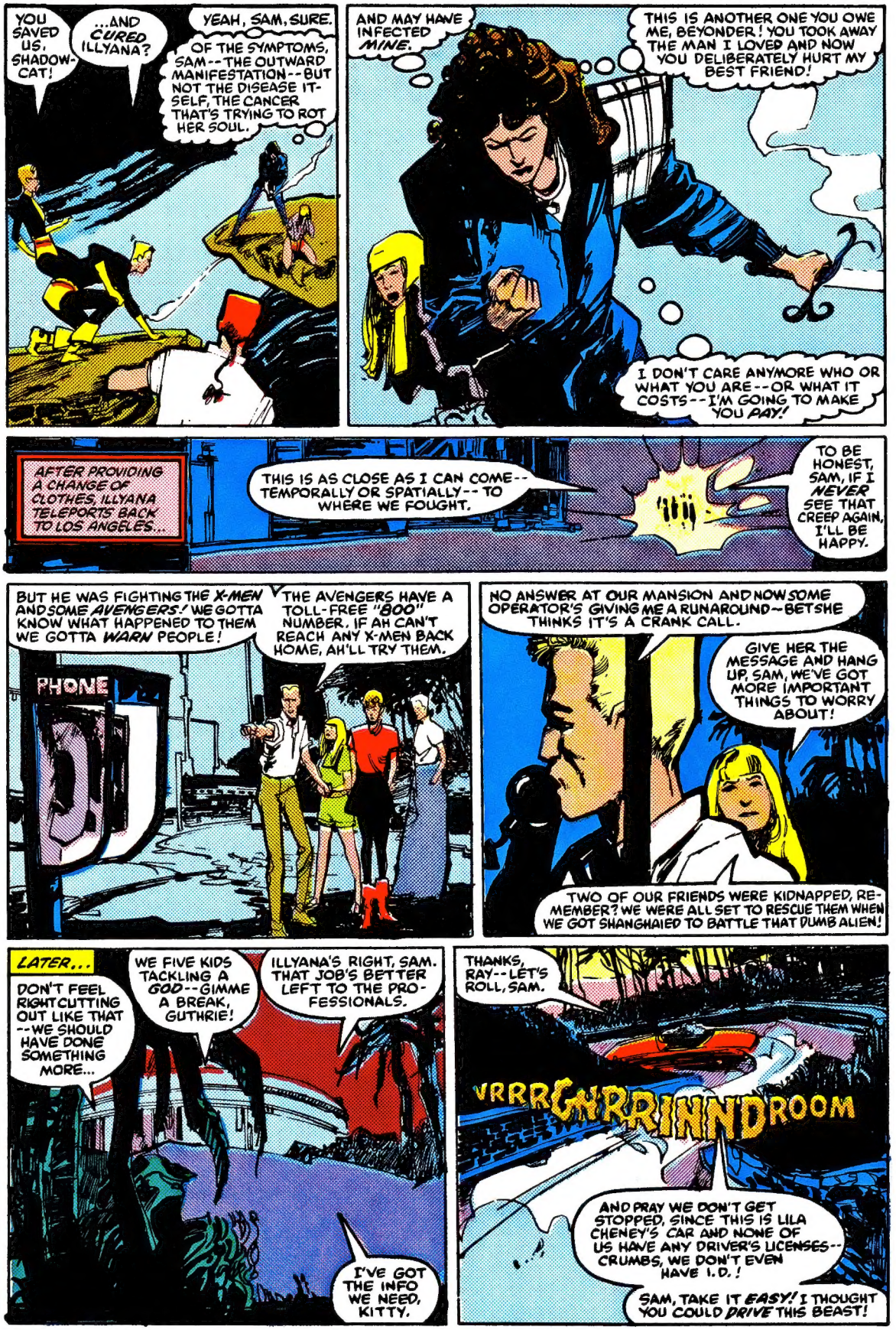
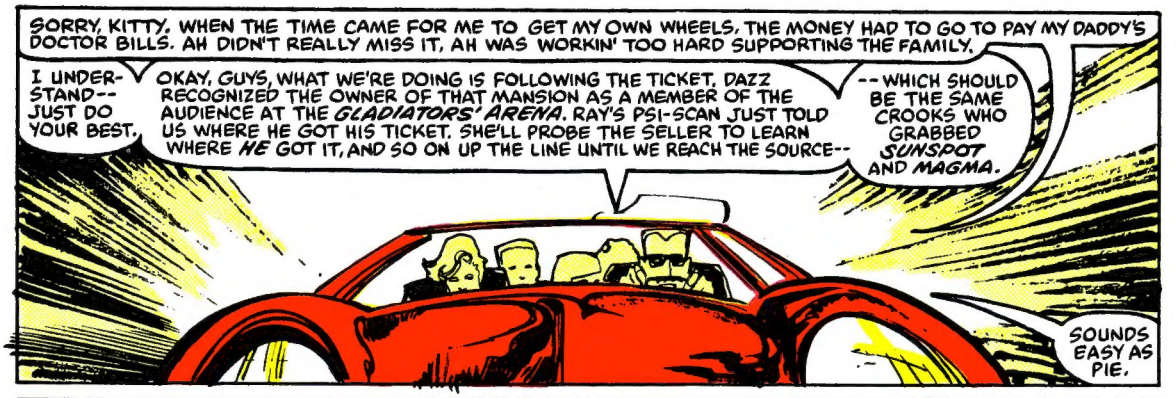
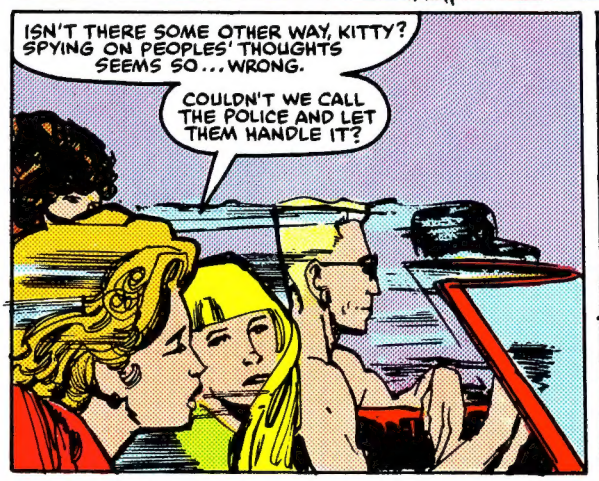
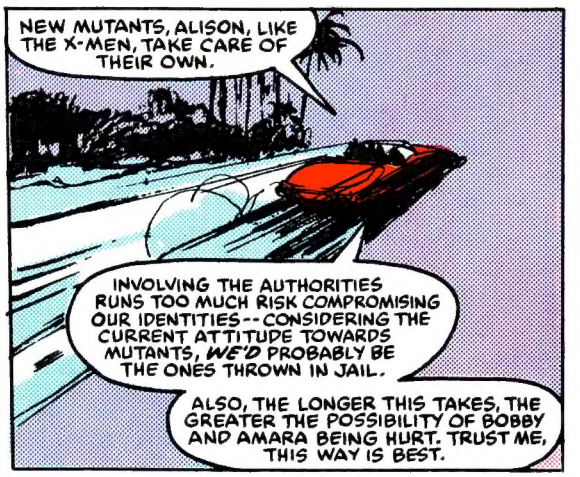

THE REALM IS BUT ECHO OF ITS MISTRESS --
--IF SHE IS MAD...
...THEN SO IS IT!
THIS PLACE IS COMING APART AT THE SEAMS!
ILLYANA'S THE CAUSE!
WE GOTTA PROTECT OURSELVES, BEST WE CAN, TILL WE FIND A WAY TO CALM HER DOWN.
RACHEL-- USE YOUR TELEKINETIC POWER...
...T'KEEP THOSE BOULDERS AWAY...
...WHILE AH IGNITE MY FIRE AS CANNONBALL...
...AN' BLAST 'EM TO POWDER!
AT LEAST WITH MY TALENT, WE'LL HAVE LIGHT ENOUGH TO SEE WHAT WE'RE DOING.
TROUBLE IS, DAZZLER, WE'LL ALSO BE ABLE TO SEE...
...WHAT ILLYANA'S DOING TO US!


NOW, IT'S THEIR TURN TO SCREAM-- IN SHOCK, DISBELIEF, TERROR, AGONY--
--AS THEIR TEAMMATE TWISTS THEIR BODIES...
...AS EASILY AND CRUELLY AS SHE DOES THE LANDSCAPE AROUND THEM.
ENOUGH, ILLYANA! YOU'VE HAD YOUR TANTRUM!
OH, GREAT-- SHE SUM-MONED HER SOULSWORD!
GIMME, ROOMMATE!
THE MAGICKAL BLADE CAN CUT ME, EVEN WHEN I'M PHASING-- WISH I KNEW WHY!
CRIPES, IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE SILVER, LIKE HER ARMOR--
WHAT THE--?!!
IT'S SILVER AGAIN, BLAZING WITH ELDRITCH FIRE--
--AND I'M WEARING HER ARMOR!!
THIS IS CRAZY-- I'M NO SORCERESS, HOW CAN THIS BE HAPPENING?!
YRAIE!!!!
HECK, I'LL WORRY ABOUT IT LATER!
THE SWORD DISRUPTS ANY ARCANE ENCHANTMENT OR BEING-- LET'S HOPE IT CAN RETURN ILLYANA TO NORMAL!
AND WHEN IT HAS...

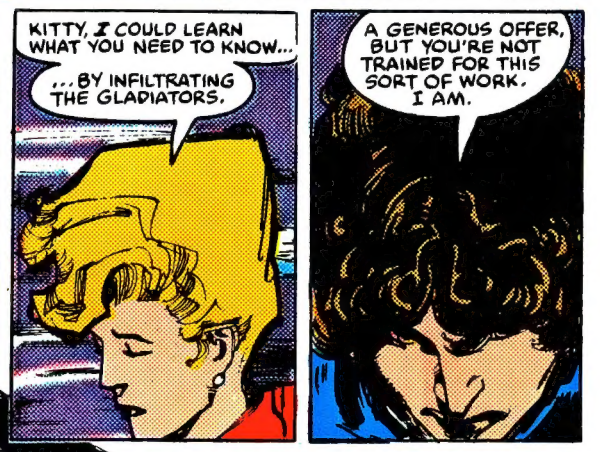

YOU SAVED US, SHADOW-CAT!
...AND CURED ILLYANA?
YEAH, SAM, SURE. OF THE SYMPTOMS, SAM--THE OUTWARD MANIFESTATION--BUT NOT THE DISEASE ITSELF, THE CANCER THAT'S TRYING TO ROT HER SOUL.
AND MAY HAVE INFECTED MINE.
THIS IS ANOTHER ONE YOU OWE ME, BEYONDER! YOU TOOK AWAY THE MAN I LOVED AND NOW YOU DELIBERATELY HURT MY BEST FRIEND!
I DON'T CARE ANYMORE WHO OR WHAT YOU ARE--OR WHAT IT COSTS--I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY!
AFTER PROVIDING A CHANGE OF CLOTHES, ILLYANA TELEPORTS BACK TO LOS ANGELES...
THIS IS AS CLOSE AS I CAN COME--TEMPORALLY OR SPATIALLY--TO WHERE WE FOUGHT.
TO BE HONEST, SAM, IF I NEVER SEE THAT CREEP AGAIN, I'LL BE HAPPY.
BUT HE WAS FIGHTING THE X-MEN AND SOME AVENGERS! WE GOTTA KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM WE GOTTA WARN PEOPLE!
THE AVENGERS HAVE A TOLL-FREE "800" NUMBER. IF AH CAN'T REACH ANY X-MEN BACK HOME, AH'LL TRY THEM.
PHONE
NO ANSWER AT OUR MANSION AND NOW SOME OPERATOR'S GIVING ME A RUNAROUND--BET SHE THINKS IT'S A CRANK CALL.
GIVE HER THE MESSAGE AND HANG UP, SAM, WE'VE GOT MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT!
TWO OF OUR FRIENDS WERE KIDNAPPED, REMEMBER? WE WERE ALL SET TO RESCUE THEM WHEN WE GOT SHANGHAIED TO BATTLE THAT DUMB ALIEN!
LATER...
DON'T FEEL RIGHT CUTTING OUT LIKE THAT--WE SHOULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING MORE...
WE FIVE KIDS TACKLING A GOD--GIMME A BREAK, GUTHRIE!
ILLYANA'S RIGHT, SAM. THAT JOB'S BETTER LEFT TO THE PROFESSIONALS.
I'VE GOT THE INFO WE NEED, KITTY.
THANKS, RAY--LET'S ROLL, SAM.
VRRRGNRRINNDROOM
AND PRAY WE DON'T GET STOPPED, SINCE THIS IS LILA CHENEY'S CAR AND NONE OF US HAVE ANY DRIVER'S LICENSES--CRUMBS, WE DON'T EVEN HAVE I.D.!
SAM, TAKE IT EASY! I THOUGHT YOU COULD DRIVE THIS BEAST!

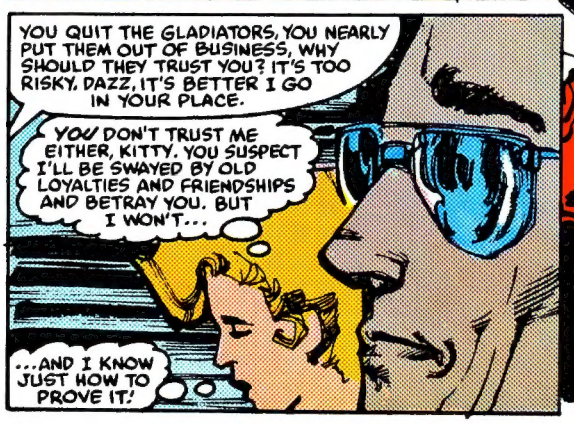

SORRY, KITTY. WHEN THE TIME CAME FOR ME TO GET MY OWN WHEELS, THE MONEY HAD TO GO TO PAY MY DADDY'S DOCTOR BILLS. AH DIDN'T REALLY MISS IT, AH WAS WORKIN' TOO HARD SUPPORTING THE FAMILY.
I UNDER-STAND-- JUST DO YOUR BEST.
OKAY, GUYS, WHAT WE'RE DOING IS FOLLOWING THE TICKET. DAZZ RECOGNIZED THE OWNER OF THAT MANSION AS A MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE AT THE GLADIATORS' ARENA. RAY'S PSI-SCAN JUST TOLD US WHERE HE GOT HIS TICKET. SHE'LL PROBE THE SELLER TO LEARN WHERE HE GOT IT, AND SO ON UP THE LINE UNTIL WE REACH THE SOURCE--
--WHICH SHOULD BE THE SAME CROOKS WHO GRABBED SUNSPOT AND MAGMA.
SOUNDS EASY AS PIE.


ISN'T THERE SOME OTHER WAY, KITTY? SPYING ON PEOPLES' THOUGHTS SEEMS SO... WRONG.
COULDN'T WE CALL THE POLICE AND LET THEM HANDLE IT?

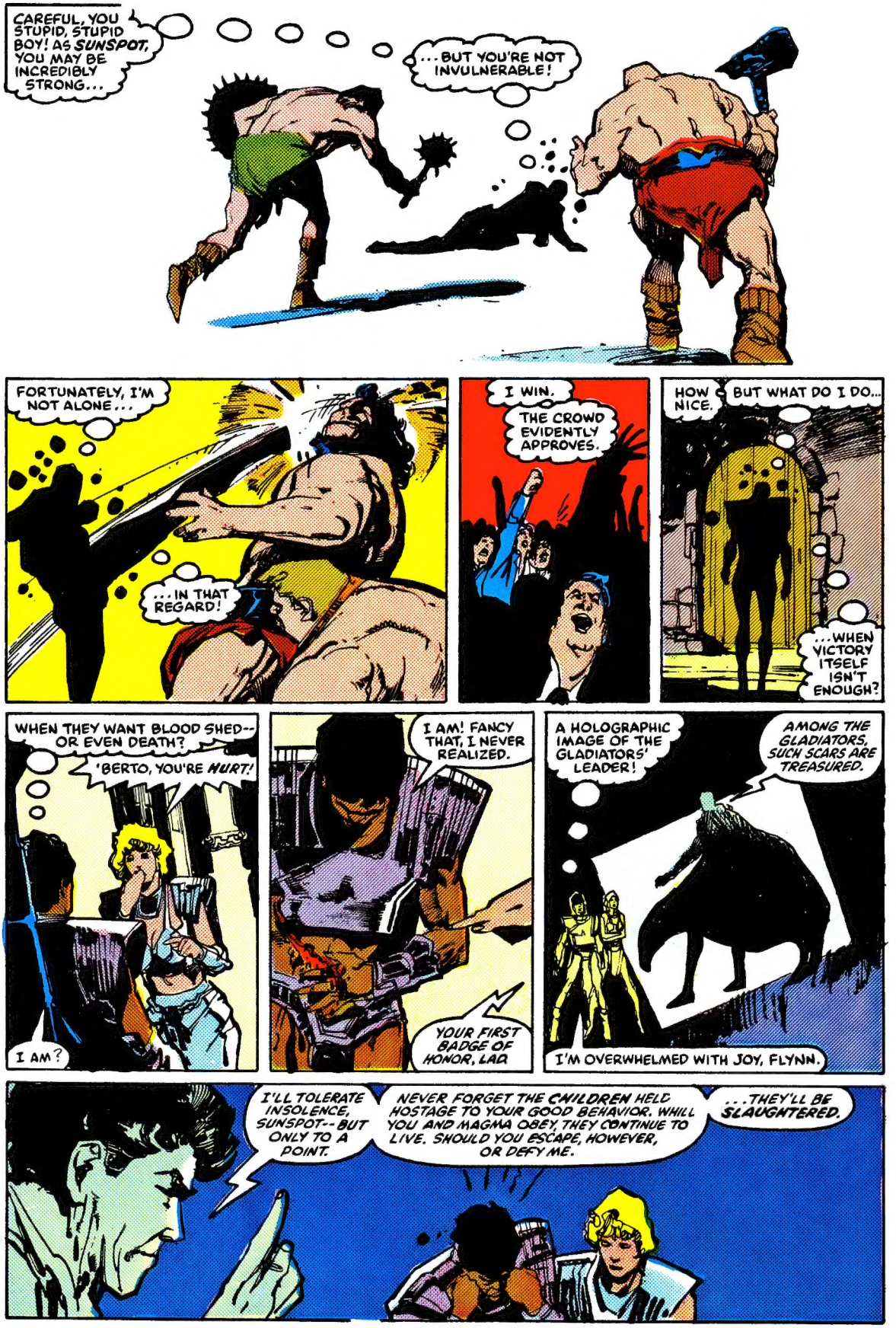

NEW MUTANTS, ALISON, LIKE THE X-MEN, TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN.
INVOLVING THE AUTHORITIES RUNS TOO MUCH RISK COMPROMISING OUR IDENTITIES-- CONSIDERING THE CURRENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS MUTANTS, WE'D PROBABLY BE THE ONES THROWN IN JAIL.
ALSO, THE LONGER THIS TAKES, THE GREATER THE POSSIBILITY OF BOBBY AND AMARA BEING HURT. TRUST ME, THIS WAY IS BEST.

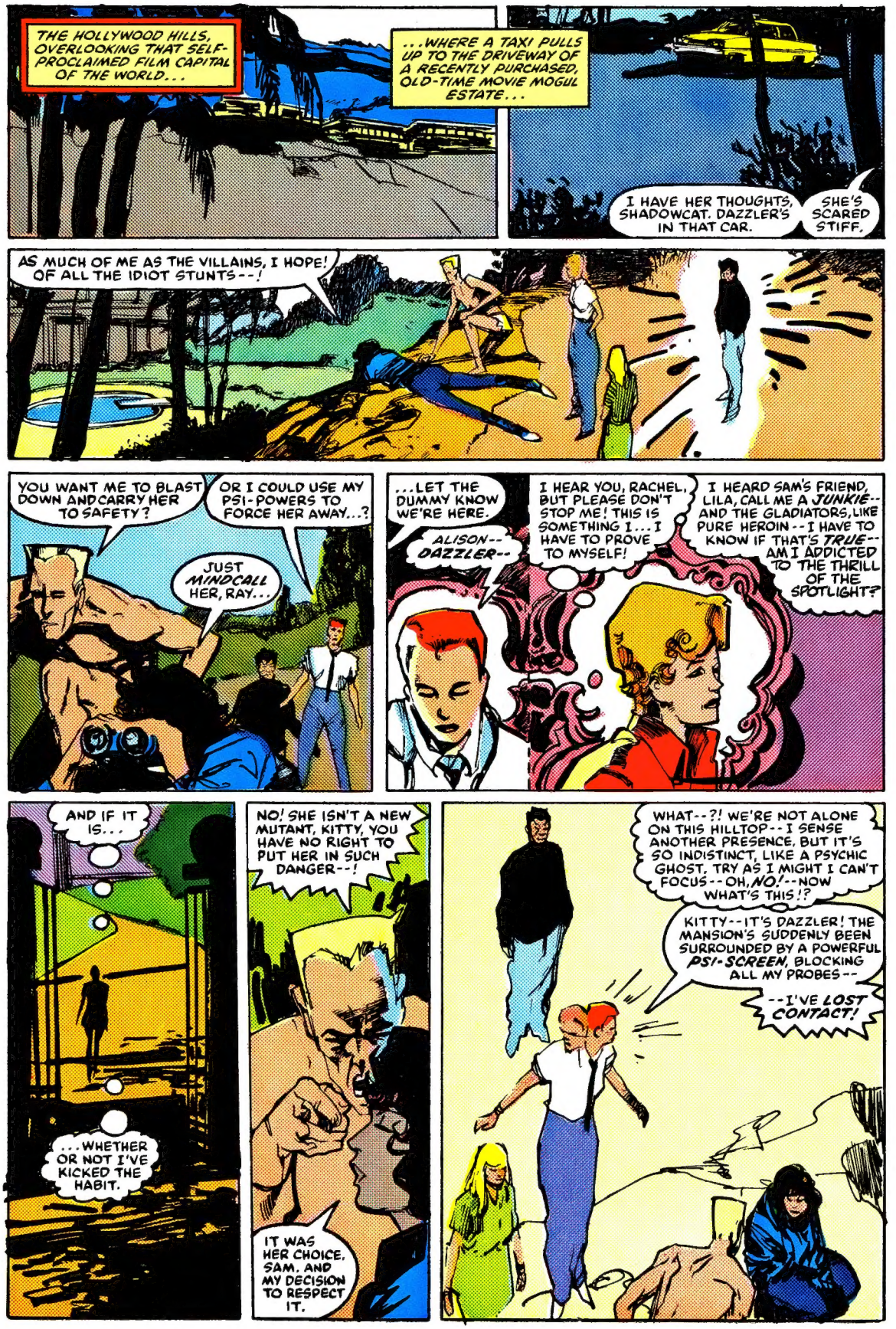
I WISH I KNEW WHY THEY REFUSED TO COME WITH YOU WHEN THEY HAD THE CHANCE. OBVIOUSLY, THE GLADIATORS HAVE SOME HOLD OVER THEM--TO FORCE THEM TO DO AS THEY'RE TOLD--BUT WHAT?!
YOU USED TO BE ONE OF THEM, ALISON-- ANY IDEAS?
NO.

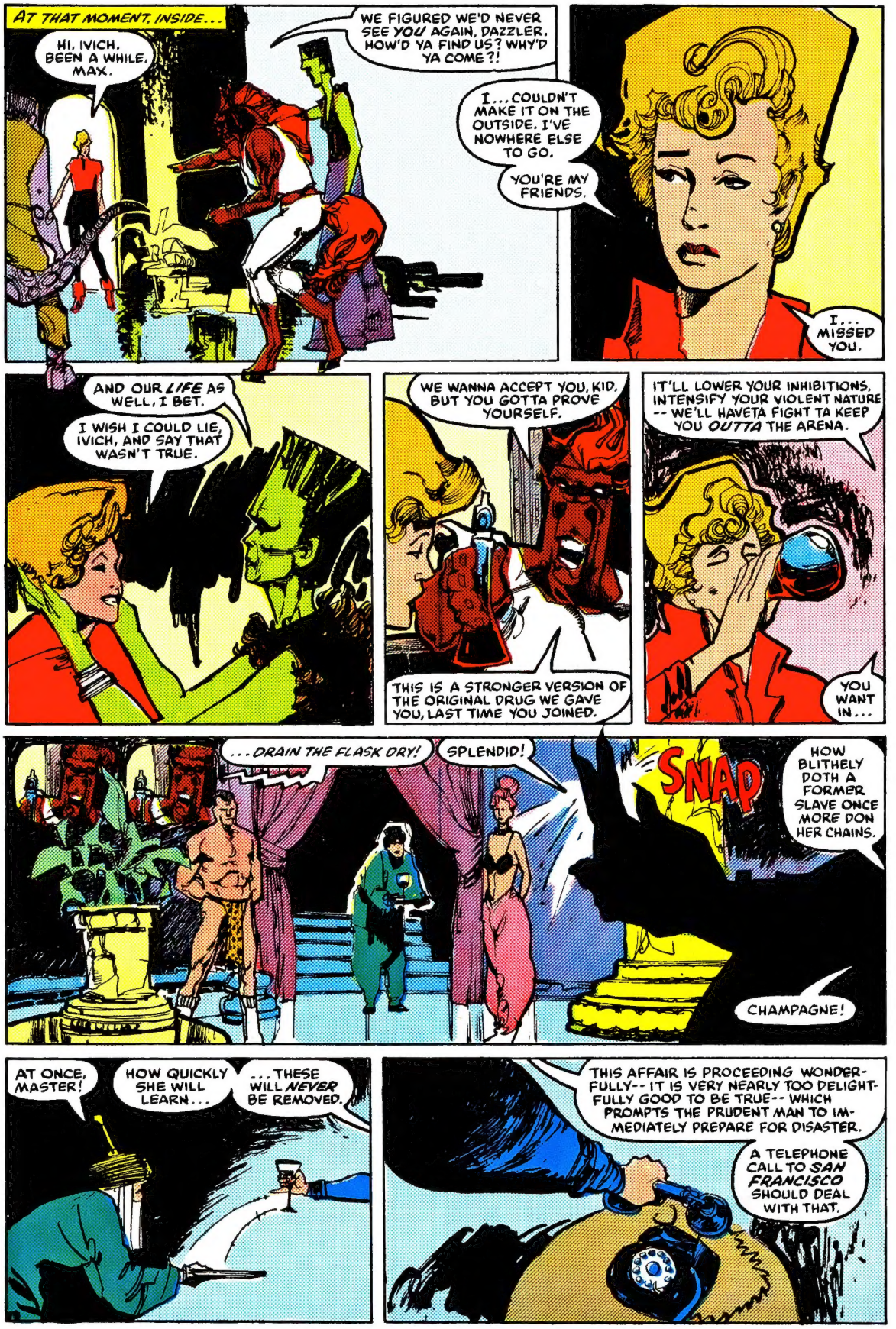

KITTY, I COULD LEARN WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW...
...BY INFILTRATING THE GLADIATORS.
A GENEROUS OFFER, BUT YOU'RE NOT TRAINED FOR THIS SORT OF WORK. I AM.

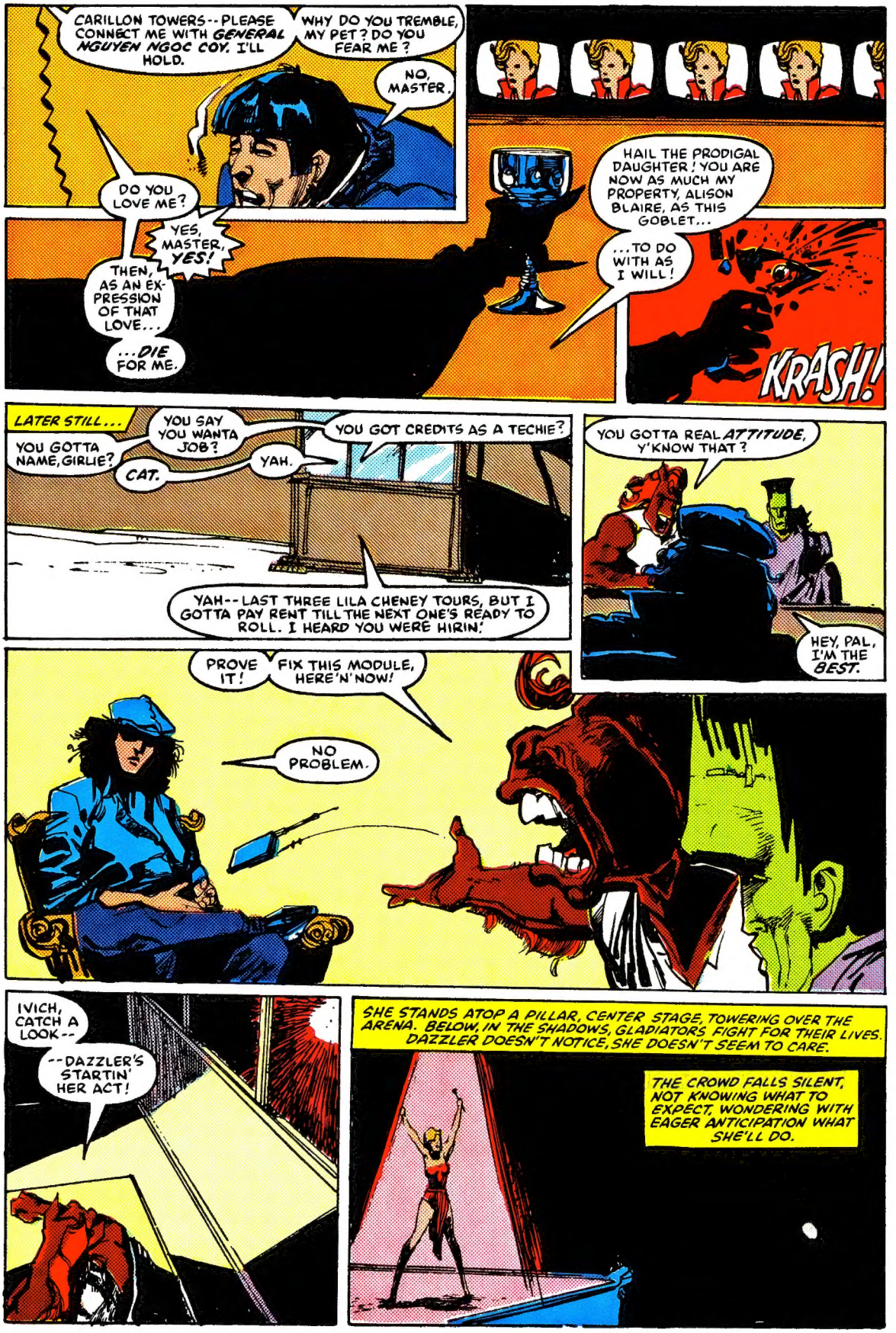

YOU QUIT THE GLADIATORS, YOU NEARLY PUT THEM OUT OF BUSINESS, WHY SHOULD THEY TRUST YOU? IT'S TOO RISKY, DAZZ, IT'S BETTER I GO IN YOUR PLACE.
YOU DON'T TRUST ME EITHER, KITTY. YOU SUSPECT I'LL BE SWAYED BY OLD LOYALTIES AND FRIENDSHIPS AND BETRAY YOU. BUT I WON'T...
...AND I KNOW JUST HOW TO PROVE IT!

ELSEWHERE...
OHWWW!


CAREFUL, YOU STUPID, STUPID BOY! AS SUNSPOT, YOU MAY BE INCREDIBLY STRONG...
...BUT YOU'RE NOT INVULNERABLE!
FORTUNATELY, I'M NOT ALONE...
...IN THAT REGARD!
I WIN.
THE CROWD EVIDENTLY APPROVES.
HOW NICE.
BUT WHAT DO I DO...
...WHEN VICTORY ITSELF ISN'T ENOUGH?
WHEN THEY WANT BLOOD SHED-- OR EVEN DEATH?
'BERTO, YOU'RE HURT!
I AM?
I AM! FANCY THAT, I NEVER REALIZED.
YOUR FIRST BADGE OF HONOR, LAD.
A HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE OF THE GLADIATORS' LEADER!
AMONG THE GLADIATORS, SUCH SCARS ARE TREASURED.
I'M OVERWHELMED WITH JOY, FLYNN.
I'LL TOLERATE INSOLENCE, SUNSPOT-- BUT ONLY TO A POINT.
NEVER FORGET THE CHILDREN HELD HOSTAGE TO YOUR GOOD BEHAVIOR. WHILE YOU AND MAGMA OBEY, THEY CONTINUE TO LIVE. SHOULD YOU ESCAPE, HOWEVER, OR DEFY ME.
...THEY'LL BE SLAUGHTERED.


THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS, OVERLOOKING THAT SELF-PROCLAIMED FILM CAPITAL OF THE WORLD...
...WHERE A TAXI PULLS UP TO THE DRIVEWAY OF A RECENTLY PURCHASED, OLD-TIME MOVIE MOGUL ESTATE...
I HAVE HER THOUGHTS, SHADOWCAT. DAZZLER'S IN THAT CAR.
SHE'S SCARED STIFF.
AS MUCH OF ME AS THE VILLAINS, I HOPE! OF ALL THE IDIOT STUNTS--!
YOU WANT ME TO BLAST DOWN AND CARRY HER TO SAFETY?
OR I COULD USE MY PSI-POWERS TO FORCE HER AWAY...?
JUST MINDCALL HER, RAY...
...LET THE DUMMY KNOW WE'RE HERE.
ALISON-- DAZZLER--
I HEAR YOU, RACHEL, BUT PLEASE DON'T STOP ME! THIS IS SOMETHING I... I HAVE TO PROVE TO MYSELF!
I HEARD SAM'S FRIEND, LILA, CALL ME A JUNKIE-- AND THE GLADIATORS, LIKE PURE HEROIN -- I HAVE TO KNOW IF THAT'S TRUE-- AM I ADDICTED TO THE THRILL OF THE SPOTLIGHT?
AND IF IT IS...
...WHETHER OR NOT I'VE KICKED THE HABIT.
NO! SHE ISN'T A NEW MUTANT, KITTY, YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO PUT HER IN SUCH DANGER--!
IT WAS HER CHOICE, SAM. AND MY DECISION TO RESPECT IT.
WHAT--?! WE'RE NOT ALONE ON THIS HILLTOP -- I SENSE ANOTHER PRESENCE, BUT IT'S SO INDISTINCT, LIKE A PSYCHIC GHOST. TRY AS I MIGHT I CAN'T FOCUS -- OH, NO!--NOW WHAT'S THIS!?
KITTY--IT'S DAZZLER! THE MANSION'S SUDDENLY BEEN SURROUNDED BY A POWERFUL PSI-SCREEN, BLOCKING ALL MY PROBES--
--I'VE LOST CONTACT!


AT THAT MOMENT, INSIDE...
HI, IVICH. BEEN A WHILE, MAX.
WE FIGURED WE'D NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN, DAZZLER. HOW'D YA FIND US? WHY'D YA COME?!
I...COULDN'T MAKE IT ON THE OUTSIDE. I'VE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.
YOU'RE MY FRIENDS.
I... MISSED YOU.
AND OUR LIFE AS WELL, I BET.
I WISH I COULD LIE, IVICH, AND SAY THAT WASN'T TRUE.
WE WANNA ACCEPT YOU, KID. BUT YOU GOTTA PROVE YOURSELF.
THIS IS A STRONGER VERSION OF THE ORIGINAL DRUG WE GAVE YOU, LAST TIME YOU JOINED.
IT'LL LOWER YOUR INHIBITIONS, INTENSIFY YOUR VIOLENT NATURE -- WE'LL HAVETA FIGHT TA KEEP YOU OUTTA THE ARENA.
YOU WANT IN...
...DRAIN THE FLASK DRY!
SPLENDID!
SNAP
HOW BLITHELY DOTH A FORMER SLAVE ONCE MORE DON HER CHAINS.
CHAMPAGNE!
AT ONCE, MASTER!
HOW QUICKLY SHE WILL LEARN...
...THESE WILL NEVER BE REMOVED.
THIS AFFAIR IS PROCEEDING WONDERFULLY-- IT IS VERY NEARLY TOO DELIGHTFULLY GOOD TO BE TRUE-- WHICH PROMPTS THE PRUDENT MAN TO IMMEDIATELY PREPARE FOR DISASTER.
A TELEPHONE CALL TO SAN FRANCISCO SHOULD DEAL WITH THAT.

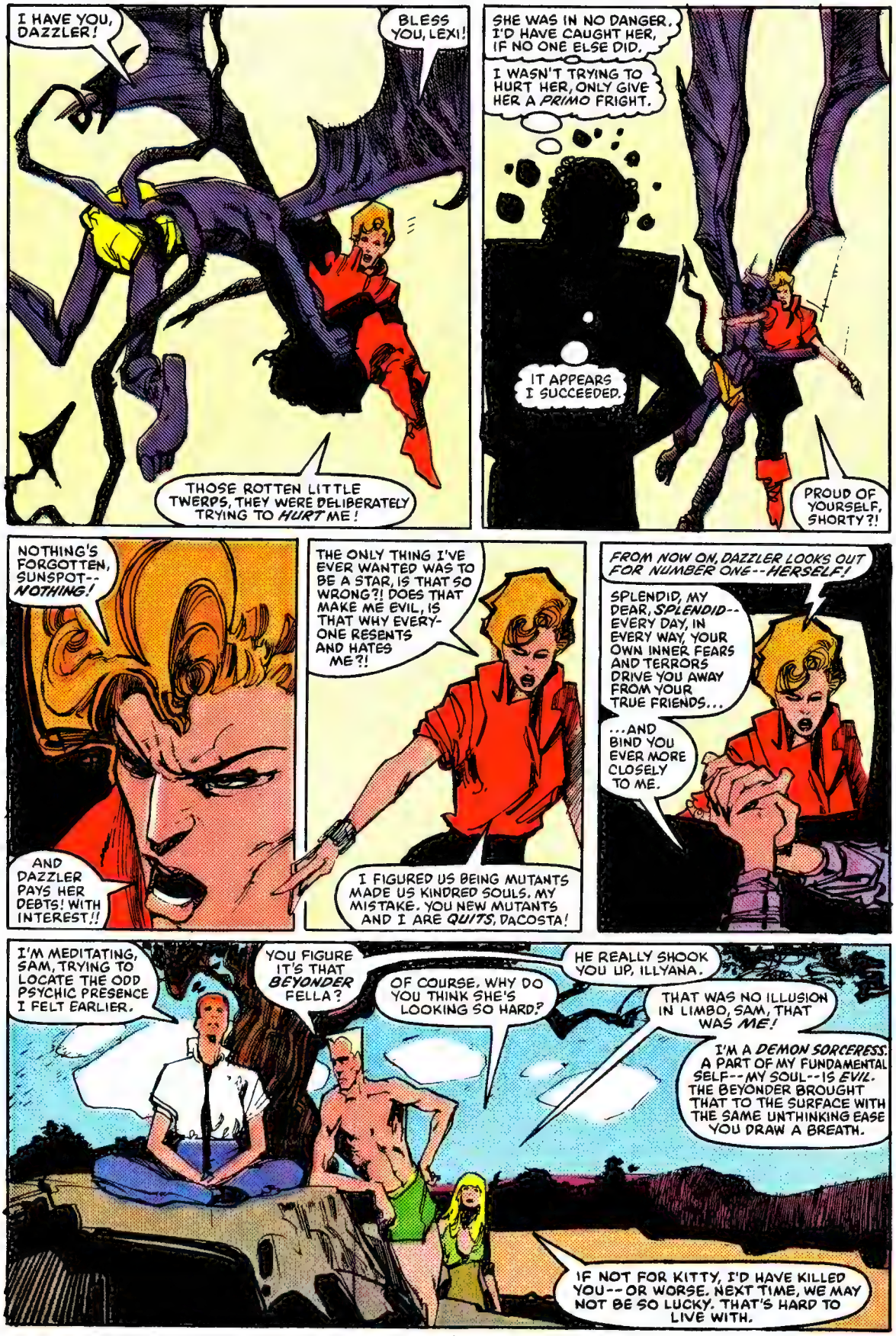

CARILLON TOWERS--PLEASE CONNECT ME WITH GENERAL NGUYEN NGOC COY. I'LL HOLD.
WHY DO YOU TREMBLE, MY PET? DO YOU FEAR ME?
NO, MASTER.
DO YOU LOVE ME?
YES, MASTER, YES!
THEN, AS AN EXPRESSION OF THAT LOVE...
...DIE FOR ME.
HAIL THE PRODIGAL DAUGHTER! YOU ARE NOW AS MUCH MY PROPERTY, ALISON BLAIRE, AS THIS GOBLET...
...TO DO WITH AS I WILL!
KRASH!
LATER STILL...
YOU GOTTA NAME, GIRLIE?
YOU SAY YOU WANTA JOB?
CAT.
YOU GOT CREDITS AS A TECHIE?
YAH.
YAH--LAST THREE LILA CHENEY TOURS, BUT I GOTTA PAY RENT TILL THE NEXT ONE'S READY TO ROLL. I HEARD YOU WERE HIRIN'.
YOU GOTTA REAL ATTITUDE, Y'KNOW THAT?
HEY, PAL, I'M THE BEST.
PROVE IT!
FIX THIS MODULE, HERE'N'NOW!
NO PROBLEM.
IVICH, CATCH A LOOK--
--DAZZLER'S STARTIN' HER ACT!
SHE STANDS ATOP A PILLAR, CENTER STAGE, TOWERING OVER THE ARENA. BELOW, IN THE SHADOWS, GLADIATORS FIGHT FOR THEIR LIVES. DAZZLER DOESN'T NOTICE, SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO CARE.
THE CROWD FALLS SILENT, NOT KNOWING WHAT TO EXPECT, WONDERING WITH EAGER ANTICIPATION WHAT SHE'LL DO.

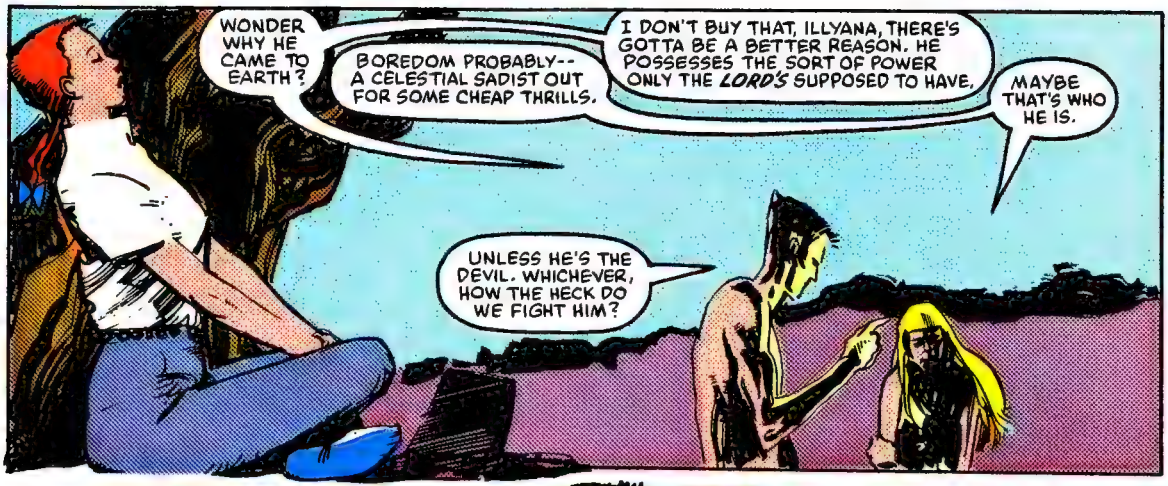
THEN, THE MUSIC STARTS--A HARD, DRIVING, HEAVY METAL BEAT--
--AND SHE BEGINS TO SING...
...FROM HER HEART AND GUT AND SOUL.
AND WITH THE SONG COMES LIGHT OF ALL INTENSITIES AND MORE COLORS THAN THERE ARE WORDS TO DESCRIBE THEM--
--A PHANTASMAGORIC STARSHOW THAT DRIVES AUDIENCE AND GLADIATORS BOTH INTO A PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL FRENZY!
SHE'S NEVER FELT SO WILD, SO FREE...
SO ALIVE!
ONE SONG RIPS INTO ANOTHER AS DAZZLER PUSHES HERSELF TO HER LIMIT--AND THEN BEYOND...
...TAKING ALL THAT POWER AND ENERGY AND HURLING IT AT THE COMBATANTS ON THE ARENA FLOOR.
THEY NEVER KNOW WHAT HITS THEM.
TO A MAN, THEY DROP--STUNNED UNCONSCIOUS!
RAH HOORAAAHH
DAZZLER IS TRIUMPHANT--
--AND THE CROWD LOVES HER!

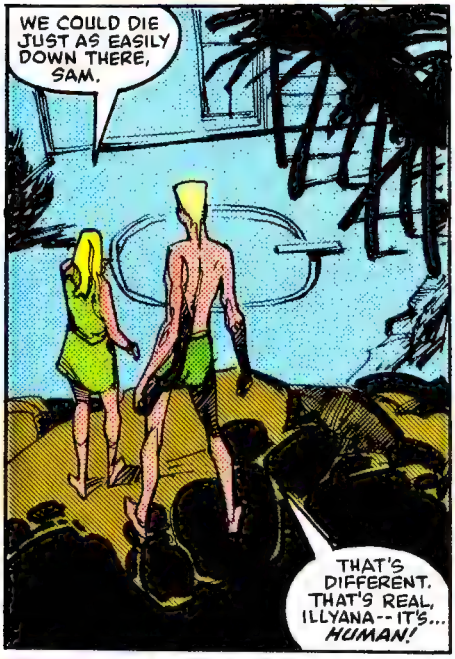
I DID IT! I WON!!
I WASN'T SCARED. I DIDN'T-- I COULDN'T-- HOLD BACK!
IVICH WAS RIGHT, THIS IS WHERE I BELONG!
THIS IS MY HOME!
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, DAZZ! DRINK IN THOSE CHEERS!
THE MORE YOU GET, THE MORE YOU'LL WANT!
AS ALISON WEEPS WITH JOY AND MAX GLOATS, ANOTHER-- HIS PRESENCE MASKED FROM ALL AROUND HIM--WATCHES BEMUSEDLY.
HE HAS NEVER SEEN SUCH LIVING LIGHT AS DAZZLER'S. IT STIRS UNFAMILIAR RESPONSES IN THIS FORM HE HAS ASSUMED AND HE WONDERS WHAT THAT MEANS, WHAT MAKES THIS PARTICULAR BEING SO SPECIAL?
DONE, HORSEFACE.
HE MEANS TO FIND OUT.
FAST WORK-- AND YOU WATCH THE MOUTH, HONEY. I AIN'T SOMEBODY YOU WANNA MAKE ANGRY.
WHATEVER YOU SAY.
IMPRESSIVE-- THE SUCKER WORKS BETTER'N BEFORE.
OKAY, CAT. YOU'RE HIRED.
UHHNNN...
ROBERT--?!
CAN YOU HEAR ME, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
I LIVE--
--NO THANKS TO YOU! WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY?!
ALISON BLAIRE-- I'M CALLED DAZZLER. WHEN SAM GUTHRIE ORIGINALLY CAME TO RESCUE YOU, I WAS WITH HIM. I'M HERE TO HELP.
THAT'S RIGHT-- YOU SAVED IVICH, AND STRUCK DOWN AMARA WITH YOUR ACCURSED LIGHT-BLASTS, THE SAME WAY YOU DID ME TONIGHT! IF THIS IS THE WAY YOU AID YOUR FRIENDS, WE WANT NONE OF IT!
I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF-- AND, BESIDES, IT WAS EITHER STUN YOU ALL OR SEE SOMEBODY GET KILLED! PLEASE, TRUST ME!

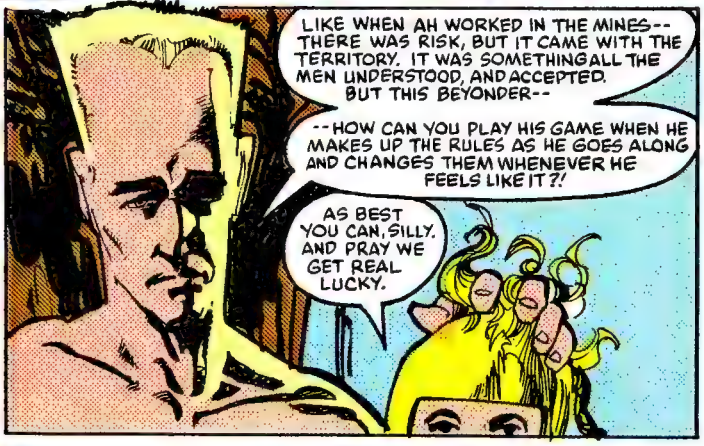
NOT A CHANCE!
I WATCHED YOU IN THE ARENA--YOU *LOVED* BEING CENTER-STAGE! YOU'RE A *FAME* ADDICT, DAZZLER, THE KIND OF PERSON WHO'LL DO *ANYTHING* TO GET--AND KEEP--THAT KIND OF GLORY!
THAT'S NOT TRUE!
LISTEN! HEAR THE DOUBT IN YOUR VOICE?! IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE YOURSELF...
...WHY SHOULD WE?!
...WHY SHOULD WE?!
BESIDES, WE STAY--AND SERVE--BECAUSE FLYNN GIVES US NO CHOICE. INNOCENT CHILDREN ARE BEING HELD HOSTAGE...
...TO OUR OBEDIENCE.
MY MODIFIED RADIO WORKS PERFECTLY--I CAN HEAR EVERY WORD THE KIDS ARE SAYING, EVEN THROUGH THIS WALL.
FIRST THING TO DO IS FIND OUT IF FLYNN'S THREAT IS LEGIT. I'LL LAY ODDS, THOUGH, IT'S A BLUFF.
I FEEL SO LOUSY ABOUT ALISON.
THIS WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED IF I HADN'T LET HER WALK INTO THIS LION'S DEN.
AND YET, WE CAN'T CODDLE AND PROTECT HER FOREVER. SOMEWHERE, SOMETIME, SHE HAS TO CONFRONT WHO AND WHAT SHE IS--I JUST WISH THINGS HAD TURNED OUT BETTER FOR HER.
MOMENT OF TRUTH--WILL MY IMPROVISED TOY REACH SAM?!
ANYBODY HOME?
ME, OF COURSE, SHADOWCAT, LIKE WE ARRANGED. THE GIRLS ARE NAPPING--HOW'S BY YOU?
COULD BE BETTER, COULD BE WORSE. SUNSPOT AND AMARA ARE ALL RIGHT.
DAZZ...
ONE FOR MY CONSCIENCE, CANNONBALL. I'M REALLY SORRY.
MAKES TWO OF US, GIRL.
WE'LL MAKE OUR MOVE DURING THE GLADIATORS' NEXT MATCH. HERE'S THE PLAN...

THE NEXT MORNING-- A PRACTICE SESSION IN THE GLADIATORS' EQUIVALENT OF PROFESSOR XAVIER'S DANGER ROOM, WHEREIN THEIR VARIOUS SKILLS AND MUTANT POWERS ARE HONED TO A RAZOR-KEEN EDGE...
EVERYTHING'S GONE WRONG-- EACH TIME I TRY TO TALK TO BOBBY, HE INSULTS ME OR WALKS AWAY. HE WON'T LISTEN AND HE WON'T TRUST ME.
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? HOW CAN I HELP IF THEY WON'T LET ME? IT ISN'T FAIR--CHOOSING TO SING COST ME MY FATHER'S LOVE, THE SAME WAY JOINING THE GLADIATORS HAS COST THE MUTANTS' FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT.
WHY SHOULD I EVEN CARE ANYMORE? I DID MY BEST-- IF THEY'RE TOO STUBBORN AND STUPID TO ACCEPT...
PAY ATTENTION, GOLDENHAIR! IF YOU'RE AS CARELESS IN THE ARENA...
...YOU'RE SURE TO FIND YOURSELF BADLY SINGED!
MAGMA--
-- HURLING A LAVA BOLT!!
I DUCKED--IT MISSED ME-- BARELY! I COULD HAVE BEEN BADLY BURNED!!
SUCH A PITY, MENINA...
...YOU'VE LEAPT FROM THE FIRE...
...TO THE PROVERBIAL FRYING PAN!
HAPPY LANDING!
ROBERTOOOO!?!


I HAVE YOU, DAZZLER!
BLESS YOU, LEXI!
THOSE ROTTEN LITTLE TWERPS, THEY WERE DELIBERATELY TRYING TO *HURT* ME!
SHE WAS IN NO DANGER. I'D HAVE CAUGHT HER, IF NO ONE ELSE DID.
I WASN'T TRYING TO HURT HER, ONLY GIVE HER A *PRIMO* FRIGHT.
IT APPEARS I SUCCEEDED.
PROUD OF YOURSELF, SHORTY?!
NOTHING'S FORGOTTEN, SUNSPOT-- *NOTHING!*
AND DAZZLER PAYS HER DEBTS! WITH INTEREST!!
THE ONLY THING I'VE EVER WANTED WAS TO BE A STAR, IS THAT SO WRONG?! DOES THAT MAKE ME EVIL, IS THAT WHY EVERY-ONE RESENTS AND HATES ME?!
I FIGURED US BEING MUTANTS MADE US KINDRED SOULS. MY MISTAKE. YOU NEW MUTANTS AND I ARE *QUITS*, DACOSTA!
FROM NOW ON, DAZZLER LOOKS OUT FOR NUMBER ONE--HERSELF!
SPLENDID, MY DEAR, *SPLENDID*-- EVERY DAY, IN EVERY WAY, YOUR OWN INNER FEARS AND TERRORS DRIVE YOU AWAY FROM YOUR TRUE FRIENDS...
...AND BIND YOU EVER MORE CLOSELY TO ME.
I'M MEDITATING, SAM, TRYING TO LOCATE THE ODD PSYCHIC PRESENCE I FELT EARLIER.
YOU FIGURE IT'S THAT *BEYONDER* FELLA?
OF COURSE, WHY DO YOU THINK SHE'S LOOKING SO HARD?
HE REALLY SHOOK YOU UP, ILLYANA.
THAT WAS NO ILLUSION IN LIMBO, SAM, THAT WAS *ME!*
I'M A *DEMON SORCERESS*. A PART OF MY FUNDAMENTAL SELF--MY SOUL--IS *EVIL*. THE BEYONDER BROUGHT THAT TO THE SURFACE WITH THE SAME UNTHINKING EASE YOU DRAW A BREATH.
IF NOT FOR KITTY, I'D HAVE KILLED YOU--OR WORSE. NEXT TIME, WE MAY NOT BE SO LUCKY. THAT'S HARD TO LIVE WITH.

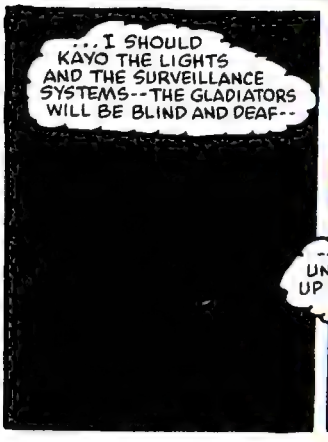

WONDER WHY HE CAME TO EARTH?
BOREDOM PROBABLY-- A CELESTIAL SADIST OUT FOR SOME CHEAP THRILLS.
I DON'T BUY THAT, ILLYANA, THERE'S GOTTA BE A BETTER REASON. HE POSSESSES THE SORT OF POWER ONLY THE LORD'S SUPPOSED TO HAVE.
MAYBE THAT'S WHO HE IS.
UNLESS HE'S THE DEVIL. WHICHEVER, HOW THE HECK DO WE FIGHT HIM?


WE COULD DIE JUST AS EASILY DOWN THERE, SAM.
THAT'S DIFFERENT. THAT'S REAL, ILLYANA-- IT'S... HUMAN!


LIKE WHEN AH WORKED IN THE MINES-- THERE WAS RISK, BUT IT CAME WITH THE TERRITORY. IT WAS SOMETHING ALL THE MEN UNDERSTOOD, AND ACCEPTED. BUT THIS BEYONDER--
--HOW CAN YOU PLAY HIS GAME WHEN HE MAKES UP THE RULES AS HE GOES ALONG AND CHANGES THEM WHENEVER HE FEELS LIKE IT?!
AS BEST YOU CAN, SILLY. AND PRAY WE GET REAL LUCKY.

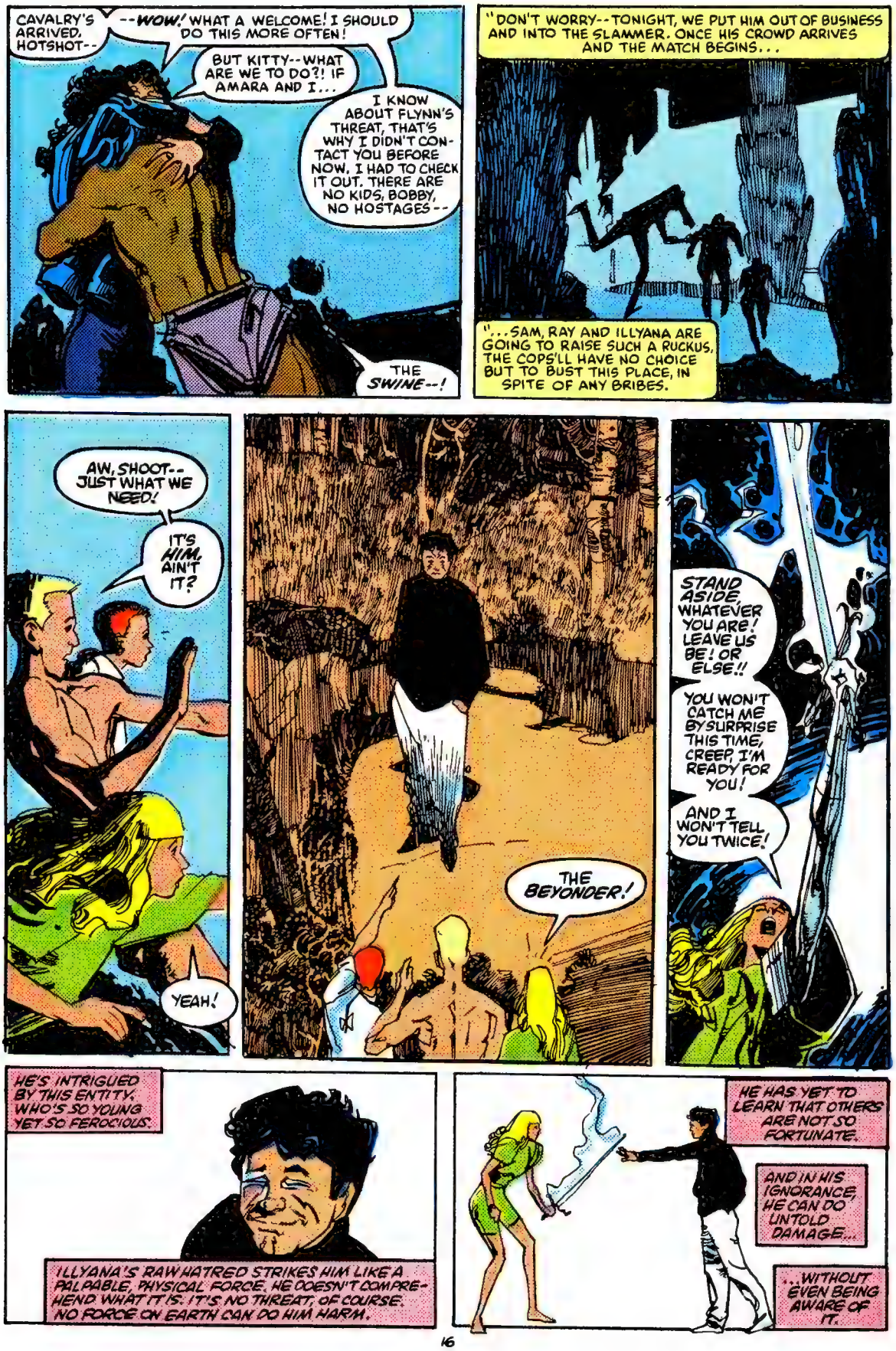
NOT A SIGN OF HIM. HE'S EITHER LONG GONE, OR HIDING FROM MY PROBES.
BUT KITTY RADIOED, THE BOUT'S TO-NIGHT.
FIGURES--IT'S SATURDAY.

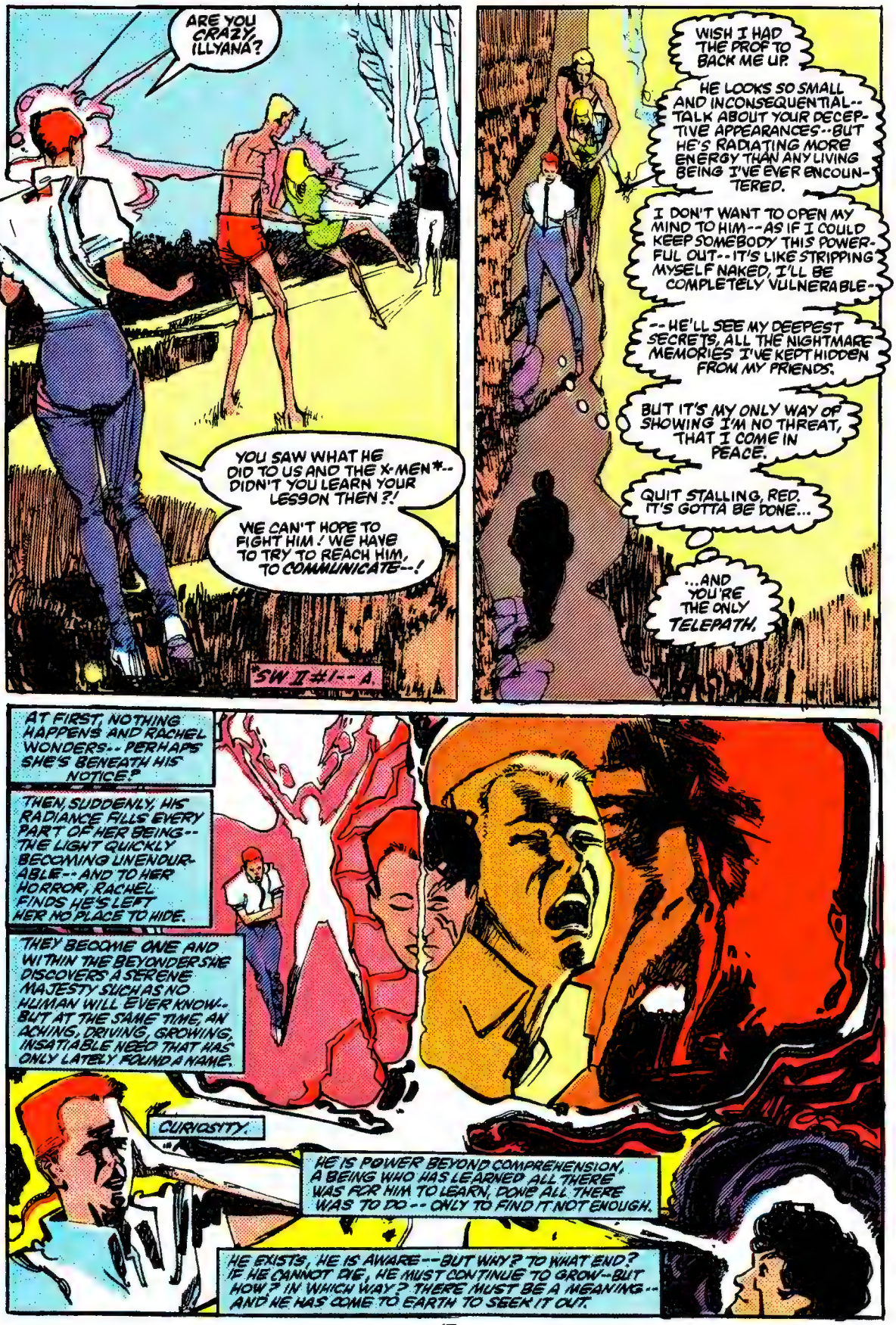
AND SO...
IF I DISABLE THIS JUNCTION...
FZSZT!

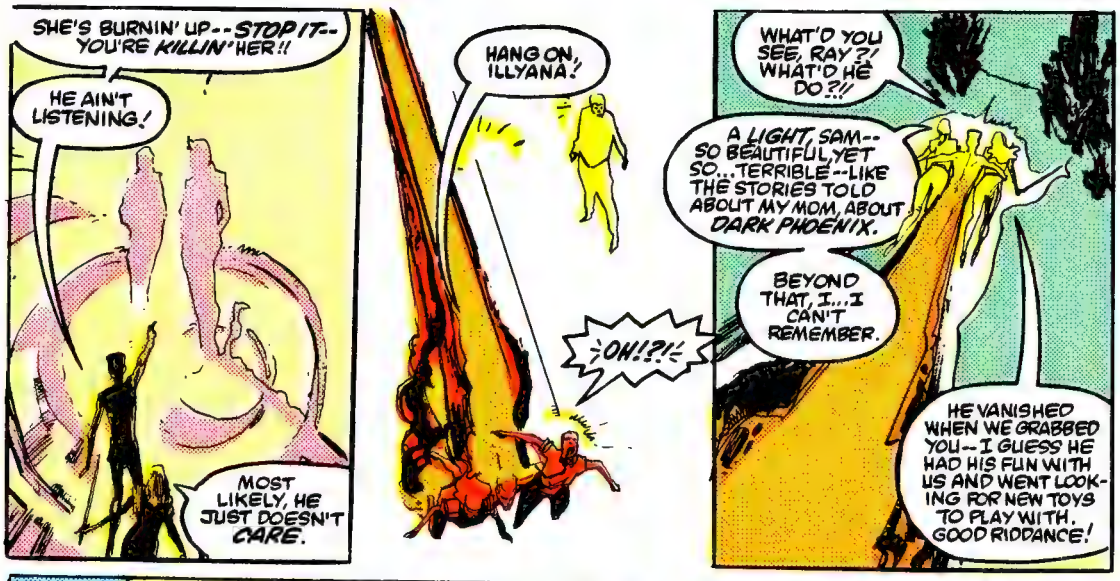

...I SHOULD KAYO THE LIGHTS AND THE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS--THE GLADIATORS WILL BE BLIND AND DEAF--

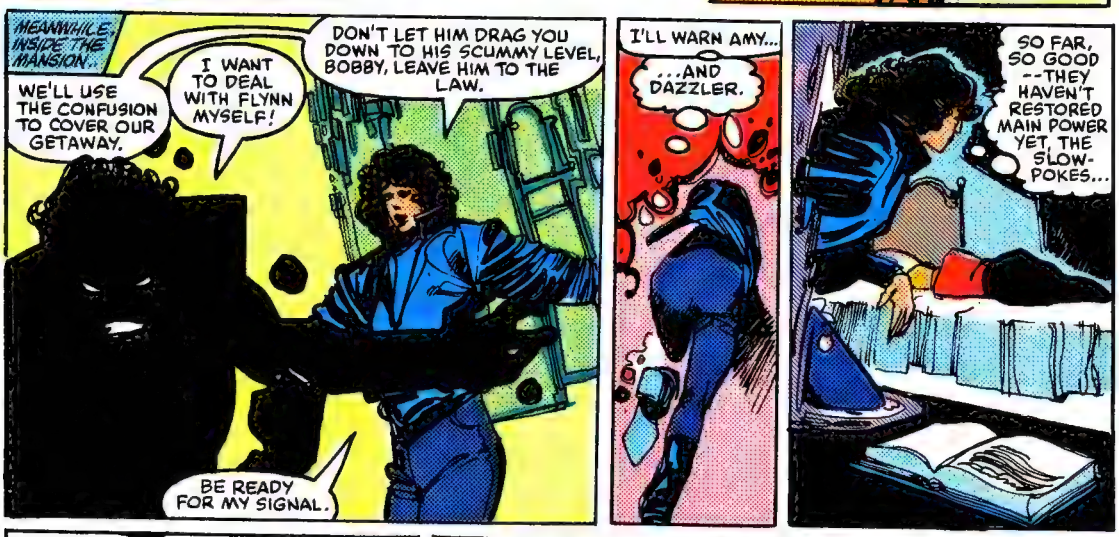
CLANGAL
ANGALAN
GALANGA
--AT LEAST, UNTIL THE BACK-UP SYSTEMS COME ON-LINE.
THERE GO THE ALARMS!

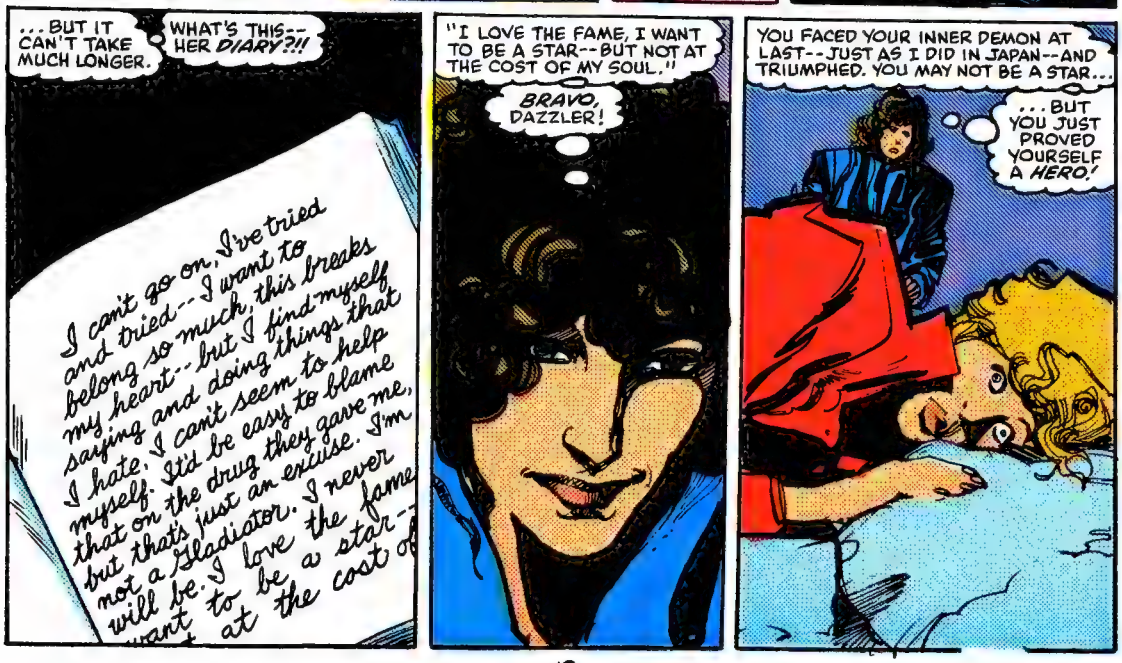
BOBBY!
A FIGURE-- MATERIALIZING THROUGH MY CEILING--
--KITTY!?!

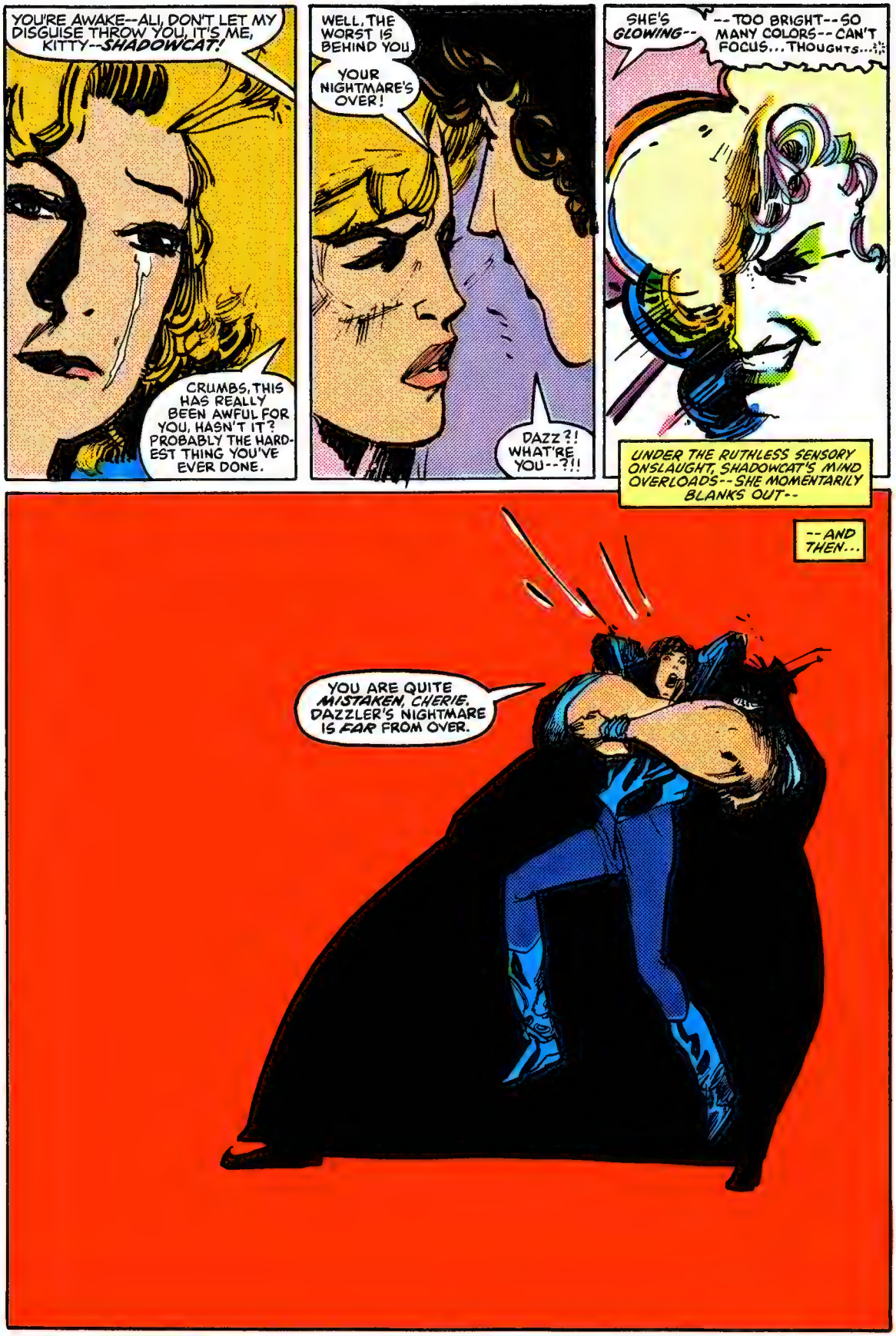

CAVALRY'S ARRIVED, HOTSHOT--
--WOW! WHAT A WELCOME! I SHOULD DO THIS MORE OFTEN!
BUT KITTY--WHAT ARE WE TO DO?! IF AMARA AND I...
I KNOW ABOUT FLYNN'S THREAT, THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T CONTACT YOU BEFORE NOW. I HAD TO CHECK IT OUT. THERE ARE NO KIDS, BOBBY, NO HOSTAGES--
THE SWINE--!
"DON'T WORRY--TONIGHT, WE PUT HIM OUT OF BUSINESS AND INTO THE SLAMMER. ONCE HIS CROWD ARRIVES AND THE MATCH BEGINS...
"...SAM, RAY AND ILLYANA ARE GOING TO RAISE SUCH A RUCKUS, THE COPS'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO BUST THIS PLACE, IN SPITE OF ANY BRIBES.
AW, SHOOT--JUST WHAT WE NEED!
IT'S HIM, AIN'T IT?
YEAH!
THE BEYONDER!
STAND ASIDE, WHATEVER YOU ARE! LEAVE US BE! OR ELSE!!
YOU WON'T CATCH ME BY SURPRISE THIS TIME, CREEP, I'M READY FOR YOU!
AND I WON'T TELL YOU TWICE!
HE'S INTRIGUED BY THIS ENTITY. WHO'S SO YOUNG YET SO FEROCIOUS.
ILLYANA'S RAW HATRED STRIKES HIM LIKE A PALPABLE, PHYSICAL FORCE. HE DOESN'T COMPREHEND WHAT IT IS. IT'S NO THREAT, OF COURSE. NO FORCE ON EARTH CAN DO HIM HARM.
HE HAS YET TO LEARN THAT OTHERS ARE NOT SO FORTUNATE.
AND IN HIS IGNORANCE, HE CAN DO UNTOLD DAMAGE...
...WITHOUT EVEN BEING AWARE OF IT.


ARE YOU CRAZY, ILLYANA?
YOU SAW WHAT HE DID TO US AND THE X-MEN*-- DIDN'T YOU LEARN YOUR LESSON THEN?!
WE CAN'T HOPE TO FIGHT HIM! WE HAVE TO TRY TO REACH HIM, TO COMMUNICATE--!
*SW II #1-- A.
WISH I HAD THE PROF TO BACK ME UP.
HE LOOKS SO SMALL AND INCONSEQUENTIAL-- TALK ABOUT YOUR DECEPTIVE APPEARANCES--BUT HE'S RADIATING MORE ENERGY THAN ANY LIVING BEING I'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED.
I DON'T WANT TO OPEN MY MIND TO HIM--AS IF I COULD KEEP SOMEBODY THIS POWERFUL OUT--IT'S LIKE STRIPPING MYSELF NAKED, I'LL BE COMPLETELY VULNERABLE--
--HE'LL SEE MY DEEPEST SECRETS, ALL THE NIGHTMARE MEMORIES I'VE KEPT HIDDEN FROM MY FRIENDS.
BUT IT'S MY ONLY WAY OF SHOWING I'M NO THREAT, THAT I COME IN PEACE.
QUIT STALLING, RED. IT'S GOTTA BE DONE...
...AND YOU'RE THE ONLY TELEPATH.
AT FIRST, NOTHING HAPPENS AND RACHEL WONDERS--PERHAPS SHE'S BENEATH HIS NOTICE?
THEN, SUDDENLY, HIS RADIANCE FILLS EVERY PART OF HER BEING--THE LIGHT QUICKLY BECOMING UNENDURABLE--AND TO HER HORROR, RACHEL FINDS HE'S LEFT HER NO PLACE TO HIDE.
THEY BECOME ONE AND WITHIN THE BEYONDER SHE DISCOVERS A SERENE MAJESTY SUCH AS NO HUMAN WILL EVER KNOW--BUT AT THE SAME TIME, AN ACHING, DRIVING, GROWING, INSATIABLE NEED THAT HAS ONLY LATELY FOUND A NAME.
CURIOSITY.
HE IS POWER BEYOND COMPREHENSION, A BEING WHO HAS LEARNED ALL THERE WAS FOR HIM TO LEARN, DONE ALL THERE WAS TO DO--ONLY TO FIND IT NOT ENOUGH.
HE EXISTS, HE IS AWARE--BUT WHY? TO WHAT END? IF HE CANNOT DIE, HE MUST CONTINUE TO GROW--BUT HOW? IN WHICH WAY? THERE MUST BE A MEANING--AND HE HAS COME TO EARTH TO SEEK IT OUT.


SHE'S BURNIN' UP--STOP IT--YOU'RE KILLIN' HER!!
HE AIN'T LISTENING!
MOST LIKELY, HE JUST DOESN'T CARE.
HANG ON, ILLYANA!
=OH!?!=
WHAT'D YOU SEE, RAY?! WHAT'D HE DO?!!
A LIGHT, SAM--SO BEAUTIFUL, YET SO...TERRIBLE--LIKE THE STORIES TOLD ABOUT MY MOM, ABOUT DARK PHOENIX.
BEYOND THAT, I...I CAN'T REMEMBER.
HE VANISHED WHEN WE GRABBED YOU--I GUESS HE HAD HIS FUN WITH US AND WENT LOOKING FOR NEW TOYS TO PLAY WITH. GOOD RIDDANCE!


MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE MANSION...
WE'LL USE THE CONFUSION TO COVER OUR GETAWAY.
I WANT TO DEAL WITH FLYNN MYSELF!
DON'T LET HIM DRAG YOU DOWN TO HIS SCUMMY LEVEL, BOBBY, LEAVE HIM TO THE LAW.
BE READY FOR MY SIGNAL.
I'LL WARN AMY...
...AND DAZZLER.
SO FAR, SO GOOD--THEY HAVEN'T RESTORED MAIN POWER YET, THE SLOW-POKES...


...BUT IT CAN'T TAKE MUCH LONGER.
WHAT'S THIS--HER DIARY?!!
I can't go on. I've tried and tried--I want to belong so much, this breaks my heart--but I find myself saying and doing things that I hate. It'd be easy to blame myself. I can't seem to help that on the drug they gave me, but that's just an excuse. I'm not a gladiator. I never will be. I love the fame, I want to be a star--
"I LOVE THE FAME, I WANT TO BE A STAR--BUT NOT AT THE COST OF MY SOUL."
BRAVO, DAZZLER!
YOU FACED YOUR INNER DEMON AT LAST--JUST AS I DID IN JAPAN--AND TRIUMPHED. YOU MAY NOT BE A STAR...
...BUT YOU JUST PROVED YOURSELF A HERO!


YOU'RE AWAKE--ALI, DON'T LET MY DISGUISE THROW YOU, IT'S ME, KITTY--SHADOWCAT!
CRUMBS, THIS HAS REALLY BEEN AWFUL FOR YOU, HASN'T IT? PROBABLY THE HARDEST THING YOU'VE EVER DONE.
WELL, THE WORST IS BEHIND YOU.
YOUR NIGHTMARE'S OVER!
DAZZ?! WHAT'RE YOU--?!!
SHE'S GLOWING--
--TOO BRIGHT--SO MANY COLORS--CAN'T FOCUS... THOUGHTS...
UNDER THE RUTHLESS SENSORY ONSLAUGHT, SHADOWCAT'S MIND OVERLOADS--SHE MOMENTARILY BLANKS OUT--
--AND THEN...
YOU ARE QUITE MISTAKEN, CHERIE. DAZZLER'S NIGHTMARE IS FAR FROM OVER.

ON THE CONTRARY, HERS--AND YOURS--
--HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN!
I KNOW THAT VOICE!
AND MY FACE AS WELL, I WAGER.
HAHA HAHA HAHAH HAHAH
HE READS MY THOUGHTS, BUT MY PSI-SHIELDS--!
ARE AS NOTHING, MY DARLING, TO A TRUE ADEPT.
NO--NO--IMPOSSIBLE! IT CAN'T BE--YOU!?!
WHERE'S KITTY?!
THE PRELIMINARY BOUTS ARE OVER--WE'RE NEXT, AMARA--SHOULDN'T WE HAVE GOTTEN HER SIGNAL BY NOW?!
BE CALM, 'BERTO, BE PATIENT. SHADOWCAT IS AN X-MAN, WE CAN COUNT ON HER.
SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG--I KNOW IT!
LOOK! DAZZLER'S BEGUN HER SONG--THAT'S THE CUE FOR THE MAIN EVENT!
CREEAK!

BULLPEN BULLETINS

AN *APOLOGY* FROM ARCHIE GOODWIN, EDITOR OF MARVEL'S EPIC COMICS LINE

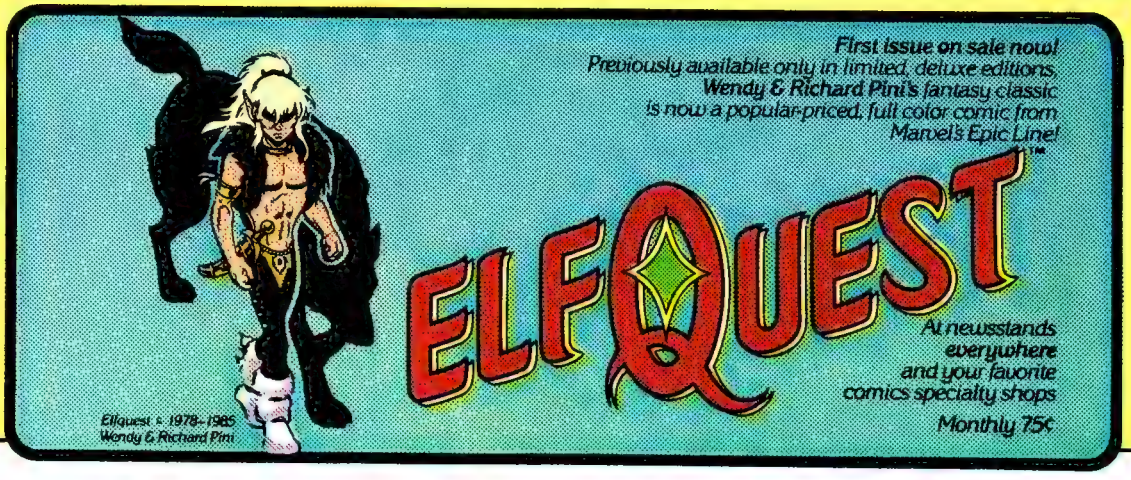
The last time Editor-in-Chief *Jim Shooter* let me use this space, there were *complaints* that I contributed nothing more than a glorified *Hype Box* for Epic's first newsstand comic, *Groo The Wanderer*. Okay! So I got a bit excited over a crack at the Big time! I'm sorry. Even though we've just launched *another* newsstand title, *Jim Starlin's DREADSTAR AND COMPANY*, I've learned my lesson. I won't say a *word* to plug it.
DREADSTAR AND COMPANY
Well, you can't stop a guy from *thinking*. After all, *DREADSTAR* is one of the most successful deluxe edition, specialty shop titles ever. But now, in addition, we've got the popular-priced, seventy-five cent *DREADSTAR AND COMPANY* available *everywhere!* You can follow this cosmic saga from the beginning . . . *monthly!* The second issue's coming out this month . . . Grab issue one while it lasts! And rest easy . . . with an ad for our *next* newsstand Epic Comic, *ELFQUEST* right below, I won't be pulling any *other* sneaky plugola tactics here.
POINK
POINK

HYPE BOX

DAREDEVIL #221 — Heather Glenn is dead, and Daredevil is determined to find out who's responsible! His search takes the sightless adventurer far from the gleaming skyscrapers of New York to the night-enshrouded canals of Venice, where a mysterious and deadly organization called the Council of Ten rules supreme! And all they want is Daredevil *dead!* Check out this tale of mystery and revenge, brought to you courtesy of DENNY O'NEIL and DAVID MAZZUCCHELLI.

AVENGERS #258 — You think you've seen Earth's Mightiest Heroes in tough spots before? *Forget it!* Having watched the Savage Land destroyed and then defeating the world-devourer, Terminus, the Avengers return home for a well-deserved rest only to discover that they must face the wrath of *Firelord*, one of the most powerful beings in the universe! How can everyone's favorite assemblers handle Galactus's most hot-headed herald and survive? Guest-starring *Spider-Man!* Reserve your copy now of this exciting tale brought to you by writer ROGER STERN and artistic team-supreme JOHN BUSCEMA and TOM PALMER.

RAWHIDE KID #1 — He's faster on the draw than Wyatt Earp! He's rustled up more desperados than Buffalo Bill Cody! He can give Bat Masterson a run for his money! Yep, that's right, pard'ner, the Rawhide Kid is back — in his own four issue limited-series! But he *may* not be the Kid you remember. The Old West is dying, and this ol' gunslinger has decided it's time to hang up his six shooters for good. Trouble is, no matter how hard the Kid tries, he can't escape his past *or* his reputation. BILL MANTLO, HERB TRIMPE and JOHN SEVERIN have combined their talents to create a Western action-adventure series with a twist! Try it — even if you're *not* a horse opera fan. You'll be glad you did.


First issue on sale now!
Previously available only in limited, deluxe editions, Wendy & Richard Pini's fantasy classic is now a popular-priced, full color comic from Marvel's Epic Line!
ELFQUEST
At newsstands everywhere and your favorite comics specialty shops
Monthly 75¢
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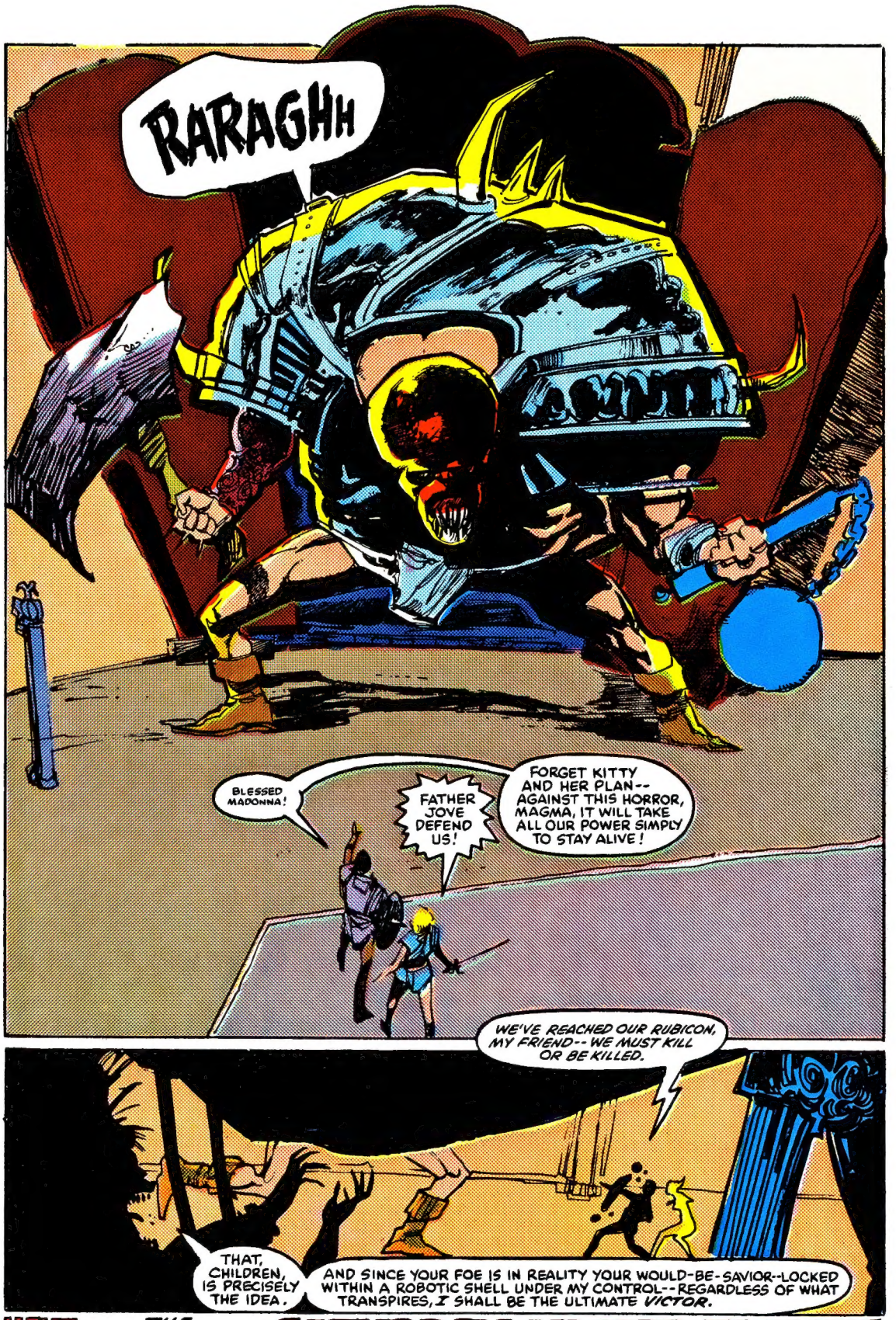
RARAGHH
BLESSED MADONNA!
FATHER JOVE DEFEND US!
FORGET KITTY AND HER PLAN-- AGAINST THIS HORROR, MAGMA, IT WILL TAKE ALL OUR POWER SIMPLY TO STAY ALIVE!
WE'VE REACHED OUR RUBICON, MY FRIEND-- WE MUST KILL OR BE KILLED.
THAT, CHILDREN, IS PRECISELY THE IDEA.
AND SINCE YOUR FOE IS IN REALITY YOUR WOULD-BE-SAVIOR--LOCKED WITHIN A ROBOTIC SHELL UNDER MY CONTROL--REGARDLESS OF WHAT TRANSPIRES, I SHALL BE THE ULTIMATE VICTOR.

NEXT: THE CONCLUSION-- SATURDAY NIGHT FIGHT!

REPORT CARD

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

ANN NOCENTI
EDITOR
PETER SANDERSON
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Dear Friends:

It was a very nice touch to have Piotr Rasputin playing chess in NEW MUTANTS #23, page 3. Since Colosuss is Russian by birth and rearing, and since most Russians get at least some exposure to chess in their early years, this scene was a logical move.

He and Harry might enjoy their games more, however, if in the future they set the board up properly with a white square at each player's lower right hand corner.

Also, I can't be certain from the panel, but it sure looks like Harry's trying to pull a fast one. As he makes his move to give check, his King on c8 seems to be under attack by Piotr's Knight on b6.

Maybe Harry's a mutant, too, with the power of inflicting chess blindness! No wonder he had been winning all the time!

F. Woodrow Harris
National Secretary / US Chess Federation
1105 West End Drive
Emporia, Virginia 23847

In a word — *whoops!*

Dear People:

Can't you see Rahne Sinclair twenty years later, speaking at writers' conventions? The name even *sounds* right for an authoress. She has a great future writing beautiful children's books and brilliant poetry. Besides the delightful bit of storytelling, the charming excursion into pseudo-Snow White, and the hinting at the evil gnawing at Rahne and Roberto's souls, we also got a look into the mind of Wolfsbane. "Alystraea lived in an enchanted wood far from the eyes of men." That's Rahne's way of thinking of her wolf-form — happy and free, at home in the forest, her friends small woodland creatures, peaceful and safe. She longs for a simple, peaceful life, surrounded by people who love her. And since it's her fantasy, she imagines herself as a beautiful, long-haired princess who's always happy. It's also rather interesting that she doodles Sam's name but her "Prince Duncan" looks more like Roberto. Rahne's casting. She has strong feelings for both Sam and Roberto, and Sam would be the first to admit he's not the princely sort. Also, Prince Duncan is light-skinned. Is Rahne trying to deny her attraction, is she trying to make Roberto look more like a fairy tale prince, or has she been taught as a child that interracial love is bad?

Rahne dreams that she's strong and capable, possessed of great magic. Not surprising. She sees herself as small and weak; of course she wants to be powerful. And the city is seen as dark, dirty and evil. She grew up in a tiny farm community, so of course she's afraid of the city. I would be, too. The hack-monster is a very clever definition of a taxi — disgusting and unpleasant but useful. Rahne's quite a writer. Wonder how she'll do without someone helping her?

Anyway, how about another story, one rather like "Kitty's Fairy Tale" but with Rahne using dream-versions of all her friends? I don't know who she'd tell it to — maybe Professor Xavier could accidentally run across it or she could turn it in to him as a school assignment. It would certainly make her talents well known and it would create a brief conflict, especially if Xavier or her friends found it by accident. She'd be embarrassed and angry and it would take a long time for her to forgive them, but once it was out of the way, the Mutants' support and encouragement would be a great help to her. She'd feel special and talented. It would make her very happy. How about it?

The scenes with Nightcrawler and Colossus were excellent. I especially liked the way they tried to pull the same object lessons on the kids that Cyclops used to pull on them but failed each time because Cyclops was so much better than they were at it.

The letter by Rick Jones about Rahne brought home an extremely telling point. We've been self-righteously condemning the girl's religious upbringing without even considering the good aspects of her life. If nothing else, it's given her a solid bedrock of faith she can depend on even in the direst of circumstances. I'm a Christian, too, if not a Fundamentalist, and I hope Rahne can keep her faith in God even if she has to let go of some of her beliefs. I especially hope she can be friends with Nightcrawler — the two of them have a lot in common.

I've been wondering quite a bit about Amara. *Her* religious beliefs must have been shaken to the bone by this world. I'd like to know how she'd adjusted to the fact that there is absolutely no one else in the world (except for the *Nova Romani*) with her faith. I'd also imagine she'd be a bit of a pain to the others due to her constant curiosity about how machines work. I'd like to see more of this girl's adjustment to an almost completely alien culture.

Speaking of aliens, Warlock is utterly awful. I like the idea, but his design is bizarre and repugnant. And how the heck is Xavier going to explain *him* to the populace of Salem Center? I'm still not sure how they explained Lockheed.

Michael Pickens
Greentree Apartments
784 Blacksnake Road / D-4
Utica, Ohio 43080

Gee, Michael, we think Warlock's kind'a cute — and so, we might add, do his teammates. So long as he's around, they'll never lack for transportation or a stereo — he adds a whole new dimension to the term "Walkman" — or even a toaster! Also, Warlock takes on human form when he's in public, and Lockheed doesn't usually let outsiders see him. As for Amara and her beliefs, they'll be put to a test soon, when she meets Hercules! That, we think, might prove a pretty strong bulwark to anyb 's faith. Regarding Rahne and her fai d dreams, remember that she's still a very young girl, with an awful lot of growing to do. It'd be surprising if she didn't change as a result of her association with the New Mutants. Only time will tell which direction she takes.

Dear Marvel:

After reading NEW MUTANTS #21, I feel that I must write in to tell you how great it was. I hope Bill Sienkiewicz and Tom Orzechowski will be regulars on THE NEW MUTANTS. They're two of the best rated talents in Marvel and they are also well-favored by comic readers here in Malaysia.

I especially like panel 6 on page 11. Rahne is truly a princess, even Sam doesn't recognize her. Illyana is also a great girl and I think she's going to get the same power as her brother. Dani and Illyana are very important. They always remain calm and thoughtful when fighting their enemies, not like Sunspot who's very brave and charges at the enemy without thinking.

What happened to Karma?

Cloh Wei Leong
No. 60 / Main Road
Masai Johore, Malaysia

Karma's fate will be revealed starting next issue, NEW MUTANTS #31 — which, regrettably, will also be Bill's last, for the time being. He's planning a hopefully brief leave of absence to do some other projects, including what promises to be a brilliantly dramatic and innovative DAREDEVIL graphic novel written by Frank Miller, and just take life easy and goof off a little, the lucky devil! His place will be taken for the three issues that comprise the "Karma" saga — NM #'s 32-34 — by Steve Leialoha, who was artist on last year's X-MEN ANNUAL and is currently inking SECRET WARS II over Al Milgrom's superlative pencils. After that, RED SONJA and FIRESTAR penciler Mary Wilshire takes over.

Dear Chris & Bill:

Aye, 'tis my first attempt to write a letter to ye. I am from the Highlands of Scotland, born in Inverness by the River Ness. I loved the Sinclair lassie ye featured in THE NEW MUTANTS, and I have several criticisms and suggestions about the characterizations of Rahne Sinclair.

Aye, ye have developed her beautifully, but yet there are serious flaws I have found, when ye try to put her in a Scots "mold." Besides, my mother, the former Maire arad (Maire) Sinclair had direct connection with the Clan Chief of the Clan Sinclair. Ye had labelled her religion as Roman Catholic, but this is wrong, since the Sinclair of Sinclair has records of every Sinclair within Scotland and almost all of them are Protestants. Ye had depicted her as being "left painfully shy" — nay! This should not be, because the Sinclairs are a warrior clan and each clan consider themselves their own nation, aye, and they do have a fiercely independent Scots blood and love challenges.

Thus, if she is "painfully shy," why didn't her Scots bloodline take over and quell her fears? Rahne's clan and my clan (the MacBain), in fact, are what you call warrior clans, since on the Coat of Arms the Sinclair has a claymore sword on it. The motto is also important because it denotes the importance of the Sinclairs as a warrior

clan. The Sinclair motto is unavailable at this time but the MacBain motto is as follows; "Touch not te catt bot a targe" — "Do not dare touch the wildcats of Clan MacBain, without a shield for protection!"

Interesting, huh?

Ian Ruaiseart MacBain
Dorfs, Inverness-shire, Scotland

Pretty nifty, Ian — and, for the record, Rahne's name is pronounced "rain," as in what falls from the heavens. We've also established her faith in earlier issues: it's Scots Presbyterian. The only Catholics in the group are Roberto and Xi'an Coy Manh / Karma. As for the relationship between her shyness and inherent Sinclair warrior courage and independence, the former is a human trait and the latter manifests when she is in her wolfen form.

Dear Chris & Bill:

"Badlands" — NEW MUTANTS #20 — was a fine example of what *all* comics could be with the correct handling.

A near perfect blend of art and writing; what you would call a perfect collaboration, more than a mere he-writes-it, he-draws-it production! The artwork *is* the story! Not only that — the reader is enthralled by each setting.

I knew Bill Sienkiewicz was good when he first appeared on MOON KNIGHT. As that title progressed, Bill's scope widened, his artwork became more daring, and the book became more popular. I love the covers on DAZZLER and even more so on the MUTANTS. Keep Bill on this book!

Tim Sprule (16)
19 Arundle Road
Norton / Doncaster / South Yorkshire
England

To the Editor:

Since Illyana's teleportation circles can transport her into and out of magickal realms such as Limbo, we have a strong case for the ability to be — at least, partially — magickal in nature. Given, further, her training in the arcane arts at the hands of Ororo in Limbo, we can state that she is definitely in Marvel's Magic-User stable. Add to this the ability to control one heckuva powerful demon — S'ym — and you have a witchcraft-wielding character to be reckoned with.

Therefore, why hasn't Dr. Strange sensed her presence? And, failing this, we have already established Professor Xavier knowing Strange and his abilities, so why hasn't he contacted him about Illyana? Xavier is no fool. He should have called for help. And if anyone can help Illyana master her teleport circles, it is Stephen Strange — or Agatha Harkness.

Marc Gerin-Lajoie
314-2951 Riverside Drive
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1V 8W6

Actually, Marc, Xavier and Strange had their discussion about Illyana in the final pages of X-MEN #191, whereupon it was decided that she should remain with the Mutants, because what she most needs is the spiritual growth she can best achieve among her best friends.

To Whomever:

It was very nice to see an issue that concentrated mainly on Rahne Sinclair. The story she wrote about (obviously) herself was very revealing. On one hand, it showed her desire to be beautiful, loved and accepted by all (I bet she's seen Walt Disney's *Snow White* eight times!). On the other, the story portrays her as savage and merciless. I was surprised to see how much Duncan looked like Roberto instead of Sam. Is there a reason for this?

I'm very worried about Rahne. 'Berto, too. His hands keep getting all purple and funny. Something awful is going to happen, I just know it. Please, try not to kill off anybody.

It was wonderful to see two more X-Men doing "guest-shots." After all, the X-Men and the New Mutants live in the same house. We should see more of them in each other's books.

Love those "From the Private (not very private anymore, eh?) Journals of Charles Xavier" pages. By the way, I wish you wouldn't change people's names, specifically Psyche to Mirage, without even mentioning why or that you've even done it!

More about Warlock!

Stephanie Kulick
91 Strawberry Hill Ave / Apt 636
Stamford, Connecticut 06902

Happily, Stephanie, the problems afflicting Bobby and Rahne all turned out for the best. And as for who Rahne loves best, the answer to that may well be found in THE NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL EDITION #1 (which used to be called THE NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL #2 until the story got *way* too big for its britches), on sale in late summer, with superlative art by a newcomer named Art Adams. If you can't wait till then to see how good he is, check out the LONGSHOT limited series, on sale later this spring, penciled by Art and written by Ann Nocenti; we think you'll be much impressed. You may even be dazzled!

Dear Friends:

I have been following several Marvel books for about two years. The high level of art, especially in DAREDEVIL and THE X-MEN, attracted me to your comics when I worked in a magazine shop. The development of plot and character have kept me hooked. I should add that I am a "mature" married woman who is fast approaching middle age.

My opinion is that NEW MUTANTS is the finest book you publish — at this moment. Bill Sienkiewicz's art is breathtaking and Chris Claremont's plotting is consistent and exciting. This book really has a direction. The addition of Illyana is a real plus. She has a real teenager quality that helps to make the adventures of this group of young adults seem even more plausible.

By the way, I don't keep any comics. I send them to my stepson in Arizona — and his grades and reading level have markedly improved since I started sending them!

Anita Figueras
Route 1 / Box 918
Russell, New York 13684

People,

At first, when I saw Bill Sienkiewicz's first issue of THE NEW MUTANTS, I thought to myself "this won't work." I suppose it was because of the dramatic change from the artwork of all the previous issues to the art in NM #18. Now, at issue 21, I realize I was wrong. I'm steadily getting used to Bill's style of art and also beginning to like it.

I enjoyed NM #21, especially Rahne's transformation. She looked, well, stunning, and I can understand Sam not recognizing her. Glad you put in the end pages from the Prof's Journal. Magma's emotions affect her powers. Will she, like Storm before her, try to bottle up her feelings or will she learn to control her powers enough so that they will not accidentally harm others? I don't like Amara, I never really have. She loses her temper far too easily and she seems conceited as if she's above everyone else her age. Maybe it's because of her background, I don't know. Anyway, I, for one, will be glad to see her on her way back to *Nova Roma* as soon as she can control her powers.

Is Illyana a definite member of the group now? At first, I thought this would stir things up between Kitty and the New Mutants, but as this is all over now, it's okay. I think both her mutant and magickal powers will be very beneficial to the team. I can't wait to learn more about Warlock. How will he cope on Earth? And what now happens to Doug Ramsey? I'm sure all will be revealed.

This book has really improved since it started. I think it's great. It gets better every issue! Keep it up!

And lastly, in reply to Anne Raine — you're right! It *is* unfair to assume that all British people are, like Rahne, superstitious and naive — because we aren't!

Alison Illingworth
55 Warren Road
Croyden, Surry, England

Sorry to disappoint you, Alison, but Amara won't be leaving the Mutants for a good long time — barring, of course, unforeseen disasters or tragedies. And Illyana and Doug are both definitely members of the group.

Dear Mr. Claremont:

Recently, I started at a boarding school in upstate New York. I thought, "Gee, this place should be just like Xavier's School." Imagine my surprise when I found out that there are *classes* in boarding school! There are *sporting activities* in boarding school! There is even *homework* in boarding school! Tell me, please, Mr. Claremont, where you get your deluded idea of New England boarding schools? Have you ever attended boarding school? I suspect you haven't because if you did you went to a lousy school!

Clark Fife
The Millbrook School
Millbrook, NY 10128

"A lousy school" — that explains everything!

Dear Marvel:

Life is more than a dim candle in eternal night. It's a dice roll in a game of infinite possibilities. It devours the cold dark void and spits out Big Bangs.

Forget your education. Be alive. Mutate. This is our greatest adventure.

Jim Scribner
83 Summer Street
New Canaan, Connecticut 06840

If you say so, Jim.

NEXT ISSUE: the final confrontation with the Gladiators! Will Kitty slay Sunspot and Magma, or will they be forced to slay her in turn? Will the others arrive in time? Even if they do, will they be able to turn the tide?! And what of Dazzler?! Questions galore, with lives hanging in the balance, to be answered — together with the revelation of the fate of Karma — in 30 days, at the *"SATURDAY NIGHT FIGHT!"*

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